

**Special Features This Issue**  
"Three Rowing Trips Up the East River"  
"How Djinni II Came to Be" - "Wayne's Dory"

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# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 19 - Number 22

April 1, 2002



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## Looking Ahead...

I will have bestirred myself to travel to Hull, Massachusetts for the "Annual Snow Row" opening the local on the water season; and Jim Thayer may at last get an opening to begin his report on "Rocking & Rolling at Kokopelli 2001".

Robb White explains about that December 1, 2001 cover in "Bass Fishing" and goes on to begin a two part tale on his escape from his boatshop to go fishing in "Toughies in the Back"; Rick Klepfer, author of "Musings from Mustique" in bygone issues, is back with "The Fishing Boat & the Bullet"; Bill Gamblin continues his "Looking Back" series with "The Falls"; and John Potts concludes his "Circumnavigation 2001".

Steven Rossi recaps for us the story of aluminum boats in "Fifty Years Later Grumman Refloats Its Boat"; Alv Elvestad details all the changes made in his mini folding kayak in "The New 2002 Puffin"; Tom Lathrop brings us all the details about his newly designed "24' Pilothouse Power Cruiser"; and Phil Bolger & Friends present the uniquely named "Naval Jelly Instant Galley".

## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



In the March 1 issue I had occasion to set up a special emphasized heading on the "You write to us..." pages entitled "Boaters Beware!" I could think of no other heading appropriate for a bit of news about the heart's desire of an affluent major league sport star for, "A boat where I can light my hair on fire and do Margaritas at 110 Miles an hour."

Now just two issues later I've brought it back, go have a look. This time it's about a Connecticut legislative gambit to require registration of all unpowered small boats, specifically oar and paddle powered ones.

In that same March 1 issue I commented that "I feel our still mercifully obscure interest in enjoying small boats in our own way does offer opportunities for experiencing some of those lost adventures in life from which we learn self reliance. Best we keep it obscure to avoid the attentions of society's officials who are determined to save us from ourselves."

I spoke to soon. The veil of obscurity has been lifted in Connecticut where someone apparently decided it was time to get unregistered small craft under control via the mechanism of registration. Fast action by a handful of Connecticut small boaters seems to have cut this legislation off at the pass for now. But, beware, "they" are looking us over. Hence the reintroduction of the "Boaters Beware" heading.

Who is it that comes up with these proposals to hem in those of us who still enjoy relatively untrammelled pursuit of innocuous, inoffensive, non-polluting (in all ways), recreation? Just before we went to press with this issue I spoke with John Stratton of the Connecticut Oar & Paddle Club at the Snow Row and he told me about off the record discussions with committee members after the hearing. He said that this particular bill was dead for now. It seems that the bill was filed at the behest of that state rep's constituents who lived along the Long Island Sound shoreline in fine waterfront homes, who expressed concern about all those unidentifiable kayaks paddling past their properties, perhaps casting calculating eyes upon them for possible plunder. Presumably if all these small boats had prominent numbers upon them, all would be well as any bad guys who stealthily paddled in to do harm could be easily identified.

This mindset about someone gaining illegal access to one's property manifested it-

self in a town nearby to me a couple of years ago when a proposed paved rail trail for bicyclists and pedestrians along an abandoned railway line was vehemently opposed by those whose homes abutted the old railway bed, as it might bring undesirables into their midst. Both the waterfront home folks and the potential bikepath neighbors do not seem to regard the much easier access to their homes for these undesirables via the public roads as being a threat. Maybe it's because all the motor vehicles using these roads are registered?

I can understand why those who do not enjoy our freedom from bureaucratic control of our small boats might wonder why we appear to object so strenuously to registration of our small craft. Cost and inconvenience will likely be of a low order. Well, I consider these proposed encroachments on our personal liberty to be an unwarranted intrusion into my life that brings with it no benefits to me or to society.

Lest I appear to be anarchistic to an extreme about personal freedoms, I recognize that it has been necessary for society to increasingly "register" and "license" people who wish to indulge in all sorts of activities, both vocational and avocational. Justification is based on the degree to which people can do harm to others while indulging in these activities, hence licensing and registration of operators of automobiles and their vehicles, the most pervasive of such control.

Our small unpowered boats fall outside of any serious consideration of being threatening to others. So do bicycles, which have had similar registration proposals thrust upon them from time to time. There is no justification whatever for requiring registration of small boats. But, in a time when our federal guys are floating proposals that would require everyone to carry compulsory ID cards (people registrations) because of the terrorist attack last fall, anyone and anything seems to be fair game for the folks who advocate ever more regulation and enforcement in our day to day lives.

So, you may be seeing more of my "Boaters Beware" alerts on these pages. They'll appear whenever justification arises. And to think that after all my youthful years spent on the battlefield of motorcycling vs. those who would "outlaw" their use, I thought I'd found refuge amongst small boats.

## On the Cover...

Shallow water sailors don't have to restrict themselves to really small boats, as Moby Nick Scheuer's Shearwater illustrates cruising along on a Shallow Water Sailors' cruise, his report of which concludes in this issue's "True North to the Door".



# You write to us about...

## Activities & Events...

### CRWA Events on Boston's Charles River

The 3rd Annual Earth Day Charles River Cleanup takes place on Saturday, April 20th. Volunteers are welcome on the day of the event or encouraged to work with CRWA to organize their own sites along the Charles. For more information, contact Pattie Weikert at (617) 879-7735 or email <cleanup02@hotmail.com> This event is sponsored by CRWA, Massachusetts Community Water Watch, the Clean Charles Coalition, Senator Steven Tolman's office and the Charles River Stream Teams.

The Run of the Charles Canoe and Kayak Race will take place on Sunday, April 28th, celebrating 37 years of improvements to the Charles River with New England's largest canoe and kayak competition. To request a race brochure and registration form, call (800) 969-RACE ext. 300 and record your name and full address or email <rotc@charlesriver.org>. You can also register online at [www.charlesriver.org](http://www.charlesriver.org).

Dozens of volunteers are needed to ensure the Run of the Charles continues to live up to its reputation as fun, well-managed event. Get an insider's view of the competition by volunteering on race day. Gather family members, co-workers, and friends and enjoy the event together while supporting a great cause.. Please call (800) 969-RACE or (508) 698-6810 or email <rotc@charlesriver.org> if you are interested in more information about volunteering.

CRWA, 2391 Commonwealth Ave., Auburndale, MA 02466-1773, (617) 965-5975, [www.crwa.org](http://www.crwa.org), <crwa@crwa.org>

### 2002 Depoe Bay Classic Wooden Boat Show/Crab Feed

The 2002 Depoe Bay Classic Wooden Boat Show will take place in Depoe Bay, Oregon on April 27-28. We had a tremendous show last year with about 50 boats. Portions of that show can be seen on the internet at <http://www.boat-links.com>

The Show is a continuum of boats used and enjoyed by peoples of the Pacific Northwest from thousands of years to present day. Specially featured exhibitors this year include George Fence and Gray Eagle of Selma, Oregon who are bringing their hand crafted dug-out shovel-nosed canoe used by Native American peoples for thousands of years on north-west rivers. Roger Fletcher is bringing his models of drift and river dories used on the McKenzie and Rogue Rivers. We have invited Harvey Golden to bring his handmade native American style kayaks and to demonstrate ocean kayaking.

The Depoe Bay Challenge Rowing Races will take place again in the harbor, we expect rowers from the northwest states and Canada. We will also feature a Crab Feed and the Ducky Derby.

Jack Brown, Depoe Bay Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 21, Depoe Bay, OR 97341, (541) 765-2633, <mjbrown@centurytel.net>

### Cedar Key Small Craft Meet

The 18th Annual Cedar Key Small Craft Meet will be on May 4th & 5th, Saturday & Sunday. It is completely informal. The only organization is tides & weather. There are no planned events, signups, or fees. The Cedar Keys are an isolated cape on Florida's west coast, 100 miles north of Tampa, 7 miles south of the mouth of the Suwannee River. The keys are islands in the Gulf, mostly U.S. Wildlife Refuges. Shallow water rife with oysters and salt marsh is the aspect. Tides dominate activity. Fishing & birding are magnificent. All shallow draft craft are invited, canoes, kayaks, rowboats, multihulls, catboats, and sharpies. Campsites or other accommodations are available.

For information call the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce, (352) 543-5600; Larry Page, (941) 746-2686 <Lhpage@worldnet.att.net>, or Hugh Horton, (810) 468-6456 <huhorton@tir.com>

Hugh Horton, Mt. Clemens, MI



## Adventures & Experiences...

### Dory Fishing

Got my abandoned 17' Swampscott dory in the water last year. Did very well with oars and longer distances with MinnKota 35 with two batteries. Strapped on a plastic swivel seat for comfortable fishing. The dory has a white hull with mahogany gunwales, thwarts are 6/4 pine I pulled off a house. Mahogany came from a dumpster at one of the mega-houses (\$15-20 million) I occasionally work on. Had to buy some, though, not quite enough for all I had to do.

The dory is a great little fish and swim boat. I did a lot of snorkeling in the Berkshires and in New Hampshire. I can put all my 155lbs on a gunwale climbing back in after a swim and not worry about her taking on water. With the battery under me and the motor clamped to the gunwale just aft of me, I need to ballast the bow. I use the second battery and two 25lb weights from my bench and we're nicely trimmed. If I take someone along then no added ballast is necessary as I sit in the rear and they sit in the bow.

Trolled at high speed for bluefish in Narragansett Bay almost four hours on one charge. Lots of fun and caught a few.

Don Pascucci, Billerica, MA

### Chicago Wildlife

We have been staying close to home (Chicago) to paddle and have experienced some incredible moments while on the North Branch of the Chicago River in the middle of the city. A rough hawk flying across my bow with a

large dead rat in its talons, crows badgering a large crested horned owl next to a loud steel recycling plant, a peregrine falcon perched on an old wooden water tank in the middle of a newly minted shopping district, cracking though thin ice in my Wee Lassie and not really caring but loving what it all is doing to my psyche.

Dean Raffaelli, Chicago, IL

## Adventures & Experiences...

### My Office

Here's a photo of my "office" on the Cape Fear River. Both our boats have the excellent Voith-Schneider cycloidal propulsion/steering system. It just doesn't get any better than that.

Sandy Mitchell, NC



## Information of Interest...

### Coast Guard Station Burns

February 9th was a sunny but very windy day at Oak Island, N.C. Gusts were reaching 35mph. Late that afternoon Coast Guard personnel on duty at Station Oak Island smelled smoke in their building and 40 minutes later it was only a pile of ashes.

While the report of the official investigation has not been released, it is presumed that the fire started in electrical connections below the building. Whatever the cause, there was barely enough time for Coast Guardsmen on duty to grab the current radio logs and evacuate. Nothing else was saved, the fire even destroyed the personal automobiles of several Coasties which had been parked downwind. The Oak Island lighthouse, the second most powerful in the world was temporarily put out of action due to loss of electrical power. Fortunately, there were no injuries.

What is impressive is the response of the Coast Guard. Even before the building was totally gone, radio communications had been assumed by Group Ft. Macon some seventy miles to the north. Station Wrightsville Beach, considerably closer, went on full alert and their search and rescue boats assumed Oak Island's responsibilities. An hour after the fire a Notice to Mariners was out notifying all shipping of the temporary loss of the lighthouse which was running by next morning with a portable generator.

All Oak Island personnel were immediately called back to duty and the local Coast Guard Auxiliary turned out in force for the next several days, picking through the ashes to salvage what little was left, manning temporary desks set up in sheds formerly used for boat repair, and tracking down clothing and essentials for the Coasties who had been living at the station and who lost, literally, everything save what they were wearing.

The boating safety responsibilities of Station Oak Island were never interrupted as other units took over and within three days trailers had been brought in to house new radio com



munications and provide a base for the station's operations.

Because two boats and a cutter at the station were docked some distance from the destroyed building, they were never damaged. Indeed, for the first hour after the fire radio watch was maintained from one a cutter until Group, with its more powerful equipment, took over.

What is the message of this story? It's not the tragedy that the Coast Guard and all boaters in southeast North Carolina and northeast South Carolina lost a unit that provided invaluable protection. The moral is that protection was never lost. When Oak Island burned its functions were immediately assumed by other units for a brief time until by working round the clock, Coast Guard Station Oak Island was functioning once again. Semper Paratus.

Tom Shaw, USCG Auxiliary, Wilmington, NC

### Rotomolding Award to Nauticraft

Nauticraft Corporation of Muskegon, Michigan, manufacturers of upscale pedal boats, won 1st place in the competition of the Large Product Category at the winter general meeting of the Association of Rotational Molders for the rotational molded hull of their Encore pedal boat, which is 14' 2" long x 4' 11" wide x 3' 9" high. This award is given annually for outstanding achievement in the advancement of the rotational molding process.

The Encore joins the Escapade and Sprite in their innovative and unique product line. The Encore features side-by-side pedaling and is large enough to carry two additional passengers, as well their gear for an extended outing. The Sprite is a highly maneuverable one-person runabout, while the Escapade is a distinctively styled, seaworthy craft for one pedaler and one passenger.

Chroma Corporation supplies the polyethylene material from which the boat is made in the form of precolored melt compounded micropellets, which are marketed under their trade name of Chroma-Spheres. The compact and smooth nature of Chroma-Spheres allow easier filling of the highly complex shape of the Encore's mold, which is done before the molding process starts.

Lakeland Mold Company manufactured the cast aluminum mold for the hull using their unique split RAM technology. This process enabled the production of two (top and bottom) very large, complex, defect free castings, weighing approximately 1500 lbs.

Chroma Corp., McHenry, IL

## Information Wanted...

### Looking for This Man

Maybe some reader can help me find out the identity of a fellow boater. On October 25, 2001 at the end of an eight-day outing on my Super Pelican, I encountered a man in a sailing canoe. I first saw him on the Intracoastal Canal just after I cleared the JFK Bridge south-east of Corpus Christi. He was under power getting ready to put up his sails. I came alongside and he said he was from Port Arthur, Texas and that he also owned a Pearson Vanguard. The canoe was green and had a green cover

that went over the front half of it. It looked like at least 16', maybe longer. Maybe someone in the Port Arthur area would know this man and could tell him that I wish him to get in touch with me.

Tom Arnold, P.O. Box 10146, San Antonio, TX 78210, <Tcapelican@aol.com>

## Opinions...

### More on Community Ocean Access

In the March 1 issue in an article I wrote about enhancing the coastal access experience in my home city of Revere, Massachusetts ("Where I'm Going Sailing") I suggested a sort of mobile seasonal floating recreational station be utilized. What do you think? Perhaps a similar set up or idea could work in your town.

You must picture in your mind's eye this multi-use flotilla and the beauty of being able to move it over the water with just about any powerboat and then across the asphalt roads with any rig that can tow a mobile home. The width of each of the four segments is acceptable by most boat ramps so lifting them is unnecessary.

The four modular trailer type units can be towed out in tandem and anchored in a split second if need be should any unexpected problem occur or while they wait to be pinned together with stainless steel hardware. Keep in mind; everything about this recreation station is very modular. The exterior perimeter walkways are towed out, along with the centerpiece if dry storage is wanted. Please keep in mind that the pier portion of this project leading from land to the floating station is optional and accommodates pedestrian usage. The recreational station by itself becomes an OASIS for water travelers.

Then again, for educational purposes you may want to keep the center protected area of the classroom station open water for different uses.

Some other ideas might include educating police and fire departments about underwater search and rescue, perhaps the U.S. Coast Guard or State Environmental Police might have an active interest in this proposal and assist financially or help with the operation. State police and harbor master station could also share an interest the possibilities are limitless.

I believe the important factors to always keep in mind when utilizing Open Ocean are: Don't arrive too soon and don't leave too late. Getting greedy can cost you big time. Take your big toys home at the end of the season and you will have them looking good next spring. Like recreational/law enforcement/education classroom equipment and facility.

When an area of ocean or forest is formally acknowledged it's one way of saying we care about this place and if non-compatible, disruptive, nonconforming and detrimental entities appear on the horizon, they will be reckoned with by city and state as initiated by the will of the people.

Why entitle a beloved place or area? That's easy. To honor both the person and the place, one is recognized as the other and visa-versa. To desecrate one is to dishonor the other and so on.

Why do it now? It's the best time to put a big plus like this into play, before negative

forces become strong and established within your most beautiful and loved by man and beast nature area. THE RED TAPE WILL KILL YA.

Ocean access is the most important factor in a coastal community, keep it available to ALL for without it some will be barred and the freedom of passage is manipulated and dominated by the chosen few.

Arthur MacDonald, Revere MA

### Sharpies Can't Handle Rough Water?

Where did Jim Michalak get the idea that sharpies can't handle rough water (February 15 "More New Boats")? In the 130-plus years since they developed on Long Island Sound sharpies have sailed, rowed, paddled and powered the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf and Great Lakes and built a reputation for seaworthiness equal to anything else in their size ranges.

Sharpies don't "slam and bang around" any more than any low deadrise sailboat, round-bottom canoe, or high-speed outboard. Under sail, even at no more than a five degree heel, the flat bottom forms a shallow vee at the chine. And that's that as far as pounding is concerned.

There are over 100 sharpie types built from my own designs, including my own boats which have had very heavy use. One reader wrote an article in *MAIB* last year, telling about his adventures in one of my boats in a storm on Lake Superior (another not-very-nice piece of water). So far, I've yet to hear of a structural failure or other mishap resulting from the basic sharpie concept.

I'm also sort of mystified by his statement that sharpies can carry heavy loads astern without immersing the transom, which he says is harmful to a boat with no motor. It seems to me that this is bad for any boat. Does sticking an outboard on make it okay? In fact, there's nothing intrinsic in the sharpie design to provide extra buoyancy aft. In use for oystering, the tonger stood on the decked stern, while the load was distributed forward.

Along with the rest of this carping, I question the "tinkering" with the original 175sf sail in the Chapelle drawing. Jim Michalak's version, judging from the photo in *MAIB*, shows a shortened sprit. This would move the center of effort far forward. To get a smaller rig it would probably be better to reduce the whole triangle in proportion, keeping the CE where it was under the assumption that Howard Chapelle and the original designer had a pretty solid grasp of the way sharpies perform.

Joe Reisner, Marshall, MI

### Back in Rover Boys Era

They were heady times back in the *Mechanics Illustrated* era, with every kid being educated in engineering through the stringing of telegraph keys and sounders up and down the block to our buddies' houses; building boats that were floating freaks, but a lot of fun, and being educated in aviation by building and flying home brew airplanes powered with jazzed up motorcycle engines. Every red blooded kid studied mechanical engineering under Uncle Henry's Model T with a wrench in his hand. We made our fun by building with our own hands, and it was lovely, wasn't it?

Today's kids (1978) can buy an atomic submarine model for \$2.98, and there is no one around to interpret the secrets, the reasons



why. For these kids, otherwise blase, I have been trying to shed a little insight, because with understanding, comes romance and motivation into their lives. Remember Hanna's Tahiti, the Pietenpol Air Camper, and those great airplane washes by Doug Rolfe. Doug is gone now, but he left an indelible record. Nobody built his low wing flying boat. The Government got into the soup and said we couldn't kill ourselves.

About steamboat propellers: There is a book called *Steamboats and Small Steam Launches* available from International Marine Publishing Co. for about \$12.50 that carries an article I wrote for them about how to make your own steamboat propellers. These were of the Wintringham, or Seabury, or Herreshoff pattern, and were widest at the blade ends, and were more efficient by a lot of shove than the present high speed wheels. The middle third of any propeller's diameter is worthless, particularly on slow props with 1:5 to 2 pitch ratio. Even on high speed stuff, the hubs can be big and the outboard fellows have discovered this, so they use the hubs for exhaust without detriment to thrust.

Weston Farmer Wayzata, MN

**Editor Comments:** This letter was written by Weston Farmer in 1978 to reader Norm Benedict. As it reflects a bit the attitude we espouse, Norm sent it on to us.

## Projects...

### On a Plane

I now have a photo of one of my GP-16 designs on a plane, this is the Aussie boat I mention in the February 15 issue doing 30mph with a 55hp outboard.

Jim Betts, P.O. Box 1309, Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742-1309, (732) 295-8258, <Pointpubco@aol.com>



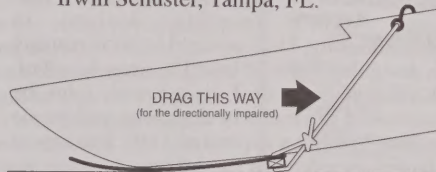
### More Primitive Than the Wheel

It seems that rivers rise and fall some here in Florida, so parking is often not close to the put-in point during drier periods. I'm paddling a rather heavy double kayak, but usually alone. I was thinking of a dolly but then conditions are sometimes muddy, sometimes sandy, and I don't need another contraption to load, particularly one with big wheels. The best answer is a simple skid.

I made mine from a flexible polyethylene kitchen counter/baker's mat. A wooden stiffener is tacked to one edge and drilled for a harness. I used hooks to attach to the coaming or gunwale or whatever that thing is called on my rotomolded kayak. I just roll it up and take it along and it's ready to rig back to the car on my return. If the poly mat is tough enough, one can dispense with the stiffener and install grommets instead.

Light, functional and cheap, it works for me!

Irwin Schuster, Tampa, FL.



### Weighing Epoxy

I have always weighed my epoxy rather than measuring volumes. It is neater, more accurate, and lets me weigh batches as small as 1.5g for small gluing jobs. Keith Lawrence published an article of mine on the subject in the Jul/Aug '94 issue of *Boatbuilder*. The shortcoming of it was that I didn't have a source of inexpensive accurate scales for the job. The kitchen/postal scales I recommended then are sensitive only to 5-10g, which precludes mixing batches as small as 1.5g, as I often do for small jobs. The triple beam balance I bought at DuPont Experimental Station chemical stores for \$16 40 years ago now costs \$129 and electronic scales are in the same league and not sensitive to less than a gram.

I have now found in a Harbor Freight Sales catalog a jeweler's scale with weights, a capacity of 300g and, judging from the illus-

tration, a sliding beam divided to tenths of a gram. The price is \$20, though shipping and handling will run that up to \$30 if you buy only that item. It is item #42613-OAVA, p.92, catalog 137-C.

Dave Carnell, Nutmeg Marine, 322 Pages Creek Dr., Wilmington, NC 28411-7850, (910) 686-4184, <DaveCarnell@worldnet.att.net>

### 12lbs of Rivets

I enjoyed reading Jerry Kolb's story of restoring *Erin* in the February 15 issue. I spoke briefly with Jerry at the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival and got to view the boat close up. I think he said there were 12lbs of rivets in it.

*Erin* and many of the other boats at the festival (including my electric launch *Half-a-Puffin*) can be viewed at John's Nautical & Boatbuilding web page, [www.boat-links.com](http://www.boat-links.com) under "Snap shots of the 2001 Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival".

John Leyde, Arlington, WA

### Paddle Support

Some time ago a reader suggested a pivot to be mounted ahead of a paddler using a double paddle to support much of the weight of the paddle.

A much better idea, I think, is a flexible wand anchored to the deck of a kayak or the foredeck of a small canoe. The wand (available in fiberglass from Home Depot) or a fishing pole (available from your neighbor's porch) starts nearly vertical but is bent to end above and just forward of the paddler's head. A string from the end connects to the center of the paddle with a removable hook and the position and of the wand is adjusted so that the paddle has nearly no weight in the hands of the paddler.

Now I know perhaps readers will object that the foregoing consumes energy or will be annoying. Absolutely not. Instead the paddler doesn't feel the presence of the wand pulling up and only notices that his, and especially her, forearms don't get as tired on long trips and that short trips are a lot more fun.

Simple. Effective. But not macho, so not used.

Jeff Green, Sioux Falls SD

## Boaters Beware!

Subject: Registrations for Human Powered & Light Sailing Vessels

Connecticut Bill 5164 - An Act Requiring the Registration of Certain Vessels

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subsection (a) of Section 15-143 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2002):

Vessels of the following classes are not required to be numbered by this state:

- (7) (the part relevant to small boaters) any vessel less than nineteen and one half feet in length which is not a motorboat as defined in section 15-141, and any vessel propelled solely by oar or paddle **TO BE DELETED** (our emphasis).

The gist of the alarm, raised by Gaeton Andretta of the Small Boat Shop in Norwalk, Nick Schade of Guillemot Kayaks in Glastonbury and Diane Worden of the Paddlers' Network of Fairfield County, was that Bill #5164 had been introduced into the Connecticut General Assembly to remove the exemption from registration for small boats without engines. The purpose was to specifically require the registration of all vessels less than nineteen and a half feet in length which are

not motorboats, and all boats propelled by oars or paddles.

Through the miracle of email about 20 people, mostly paddlers, but some rowers, showed up for the legislative committee public hearing on Tuesday February, 19 before 9am. It was ESSENTIAL that we small craft people showed up. We were far more numerous than the committee expected. Many testified eloquently to the lack of need for this bill. Robert Crook, registered lobbyist for the Con-

necticut Sportsmen's Alliance also testified against the bill, a very professional job on short notice. As a result Bill 5164 will probably be withdrawn.

I would expect future bills of this type may thus have been discouraged but there was interest on the part of the committee about safety training, professional kayak tours/rentals, etc. which were not part of the proposed bill, so we must remain alert.

John Stratton, Conn. Oar & Paddle Club

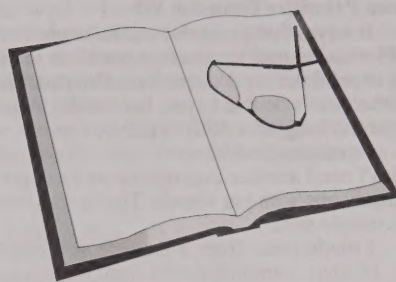


# New Plywood Boats And a Few Others

By Thomas Firth Jones

208 Pages 7" x 10" Paperback  
50 Line Drawings, 30 Photos  
Sheridan House July 2001

Reviewed by Norm Benedict



## Book Reviews

*The Compleat Small Boat Book* would be a more apt title for Thomas Firth Jones latest. This review was delayed by my considerable reading and re-reading searching for the essential objectives(s) of a mostly well written book on small boats encompassing, myriad design, construction, and operational aspects.

For the builder-sailor minded there are treatises on 19-20 boats ranging from kayaks to cruising multihulls. Incidentally, Tom Jones is also an experienced transoceanic sailor. Jones brings out a point that some designers have others do their drafting. Certainly some never had hands-on building experience. And lastly, some have never gone to sea.

I believe Tom Jones first gained prominence from designing, building, and operating his 22' 10hp outboard powered "long, narrow, powerboat". With a somewhat discouraging name of *Puxe*, it nevertheless reminded us of the dynamics of longer, less beamy boats. Jones gives credit to the great versatility of Weston Farmer. Jones notes a personal *Puxe* ownership of thirteen years and provides an updating. I see this as a rare example of the great worth of a proper boat. Or, as has often been stated, boating pleasure is inverse to cost and size.

Jones makes many references to Phil Bolger and indeed includes in much detail an eleven page chapter, "Phil Bolger; An Appreciation". Jones also reveals his appreciation of many other small boat designers like hard-handed builder Tom Colvin, who managed an awakening of the Chinese Junk rigs, to Joe Dobler, who coincidentally worked in the same engineering department with me at the North American Rockwell aerospace firm. Over the years Joe and I visited often reviewing his latest iteration of a thoroughly practical daysailing skiff. Certainly a most gentlemanly and reclusive person. I'm amazed at Jones' efforts in learning of Dobler's work and redrawing his plans after Joe's passing.

If the underlying direction of this book lies in judgement of small boat designers, I can't help but rate it highly. I'm supported to some extent by Phil Bolger's frequently crediting his mentors such as Lindsay Lord and John Hacker. I find it interesting that Phil Bolger, with great talents in high speed power yacht design, eventually pioneered all aspects of the most utilitarian sail and rowing boats ever. Famed Bill Garden apparently became the chosen designer of large, mega-million dollar yachts. But just scratch him and he'll seemingly drop everything to concentrate on a minimum plywood boat small enough for young people to afford building and sailing.

Possibly reflecting Thoreau's observation that most men lead lives of quiet desperation,

my awareness of small boat design started at the bottom of the Great Depression with William Atkin's monthly designs in *MotorBoating*. I was amazed at his versatility in designing types of boat I'd never heard of. In later years when I visited with John, he mentioned the monthly designing and article writing brought a stipend of \$150. I'm a most staunch supporter of the Atkins.

Over the years I've met many of these leading designers; Bill Garden, Bob Beebe, Phil Bolger, Joe Dobler, and coincidentally flew advanced gunnery trainers with Art Piver, Jay Benford, and Ken Hankinson, who was formerly associated with the productive Glen-L Marine in providing designs for the masses. I've also enjoyed numerous correspondences with such a Phil Bolger and Tom Colvin. Jones reports that Bolger writes an estimated 1,000 letters a year. My contribution to that burden has been questioning some design or else operational point. Bolger gives unending credit to Raymond Hunt.

In all cases these designers had met one outstanding characteristic, elegance. Of late we read various artful quotes that "The soul of a boat is..." In my view it is the designer. Further these designers actually live their designs. From a continuity stand point, persons such as Phil Bolger should receive some kind of a maritime Humanity Award.

Another issue of interest would be finding out which designer's work produced the most hulls. The Snipe? Optimist? Years ago I kidded Bill Garden that boat designers must be "psychologists to the masses" considering heart-felt appreciating while sitting fireside. A note from Bill Garden is a masterpiece in summation and brevity.

Occasionally some designer proportions something in hull or rig perfectly. In designer lingo "he got it right". Occasionally some individual turns out such a "got it right" design generating the feeling that some Raymond Hunt might be out there inventing something new and better. I found resentments amongst designers at an absolute minimum.

I believe Tom Jones has catapulted himself from a one man shop/builder and occasional writer to a person of much significance. This book is packed with technical details sufficient for anyone/everyone interested in small boat design. I enthusiastically recommend, that Thomas Firth Jones' *New Plywood Boats and a Few Others* has something for everyone and should be a necessary item for all nautical libraries

# The Last of the Boom Ships

Oral Histories of the U.S.  
Merchant Marine 1927-2000

Jim Whalen  
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The International Online Library  
Bloomington, IN 47404  
2000 Softbound (price not listed)  
www.1stbooks.com

Reviewed by John Hawkinson

The era of the boom ships spanned most of the twentieth century, occurring between the last of the sailing vessels and early cargo ships early of the 1900s and the container ships and super tankers of today. Boom ship implies a method of cargo handling, lifting objects in slings from fitted booms, now all but obsolete. This book tells the oral history of the deck officers who ran these vessels in war and peace. The narrative is segmented into episodes. Each chapter takes us through one phase in their careers so that we have them all going through their training, their first job, their advance in rank, special commands such as tankers or tramps, war duty, heavy weather, unusual experiences, and finally retirement. The appeal of these fragments is that we see each of fifteen lives at sea from the individual's viewpoint.

The author, Jim Whalen, trained at the New York Maritime College, sailed as third mate on U.S. ships in the 1960s, but married and spent 32 years as an FBI agent. He keeps his Merchant Marine license current and has maintained contact with his colleagues. Jim's interviews are herein compiled and presented giving us a comprehensive view of life at sea on cargo ships.

To be trained as a deck officer in the 1920s for several contributors included extended cruises on training vessels such as the *Newport* or the *Annapolis* under sail with steam power. In later years, the emphasis shifted to classwork and vessels under power alone. At the end of each segment we are left with a composite picture of the schooling and basic training of these officers.

Many of the senior officers reached the hiring on phase during the depression; thus it is no mystery that jobs were hard to find. At times an officer would reach the top as captain, only to drop back to second or third mate or even able-bodied seaman on the next trip to stay employed. Depending on which year the officer got started each faced additional hurdles such as union choice, wartime hazards, or noxious cargoes such as coal or guano. Admiral Bauman wrote, "During loading, coal dust was everywhere. I took to buying used coveralls, wearing them with the collar and cuffs taped closed, and throwing the suit overboard on departure."

Tanker officers are faithful to their calling and, because of the liquid cargo and increased displacement, talk a lot about the trim, the stability and the increased inertia over a



standard freighter. Some ships had unusual cargoes. On return trips from India one ship sometimes carried elephants, pythons and monkeys for Frank Buck's "Bring 'Em Back Alive" Circus. When asked what he knew about carrying elephants, Captain Carter replied, "A lot more than when I started."

Teresa Preston, the one woman officer contributing to this book, graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in 1978, and chose tankers over containers. She notes a recent decline in camaraderie among crews comparing the current loneliness of men glued to their Walkman cassette and CD players to the days of her initiation with their off-watch card games and WWII sea stories.

Sometimes the navigational equipment aboard was skimpy or otherwise compromised. Captain Atkinson tells of one load of scrap iron, which befuddled the steering compass while the ship's gyro compass was broken. The compass correction required "The largest number of magnets I ever saw," while his Second Mate fabricated a new part and repaired the gyro. Atkinson also recounts the tragic loss of 19 men from fire and explosion resulting from two torpedo hits to a tanker in the Gulf of Mexico in 1942.

Three unique commands are outlined in this book. Commodore Alexanderson became skipper of the *SS United States* in 1964 after many voyages as executive officer. His fourteen years on this pride of American shipbuilding followed a career in liners that started in 1934 and ended when the *United States* was laid up after her 400th voyage. A second was Captain Glen, who served as Third and Second Officer on the Nuclear Ship *Savannah*. He points out that with this experimental mode of power she required nineteen licensed engineers, never carried passengers, nor was she a working cargo ship, but was intended to exhibit the peaceful use of atomic energy. Third was the 986' *SS Sam Houston*, a LASH (Lighter Aboard Ship) vessel, which carried 83 barges each 30' x 60'. Captain Warner describes the LASH concept of loading grain in the grain belt here, towing the barge to New Orleans, shipping to the Netherlands, and towing from Rotterdam to a destination. The freight rate for grain failed to offset the cost of this system.

It is doubtful that the current container ships require the services of a Glencannon or other relics of the tramp steamer era, or that *Colliers* magazine would appear in their wardrooms. Not all of tradition is lost, however. Captain Preston recounts that, "At midnight on another Christmas on the same ship the Captain was on the bridge for stormy weather. So that no one would miss the Christmas spirit, he read the Nativity passage from the Bible by the light of the radar."

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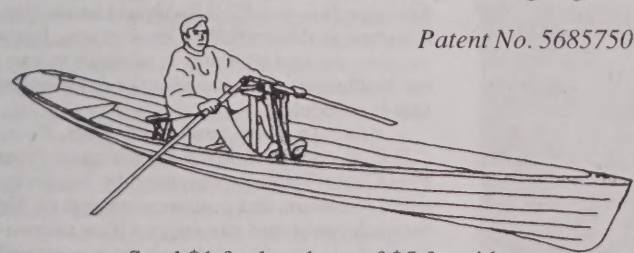
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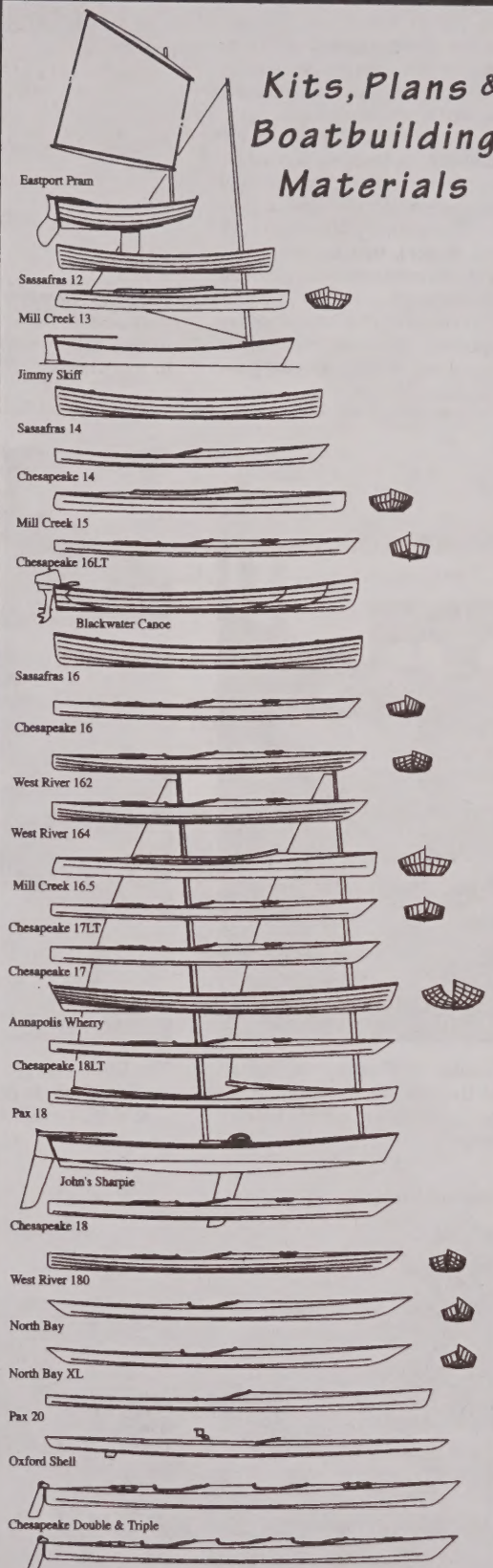
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**CHESAPEAKE LIGHT CRAFT**



On September 11, 2001 recreational boating in New York Harbor drew to an abrupt halt, and life changed in so many other ways too for New Yorkers and all Americans. This report describes some of our summer activities that seem simple now, but even pre-September 11th were remarkable to plan and execute. Those resulting very worthwhile, even spectacular, experiences for rowers involved the scenery of a great city; its bridges, and an incredible complex of rivers, canals, creeks, tidal strait, and natural harbor. It's the hope of East River C.R.E.W. (Community Recreation & Education on the Water), that in seasons to come this rowing environment will be even more available to everyone.

Since the 9/11 disaster, I've had difficulty recalling and reporting the events of summer 2001. But a video of one of them and the photo-

## Three Rowing Trips Up the East River Summer 2001

By Mary Nell Hawk

### Introduction

tos I took began to bring them back. My report details three of East River C.R.E.W.'s rowing activities in Summer 2001, all planned in association with Floating the Apple Inc.,

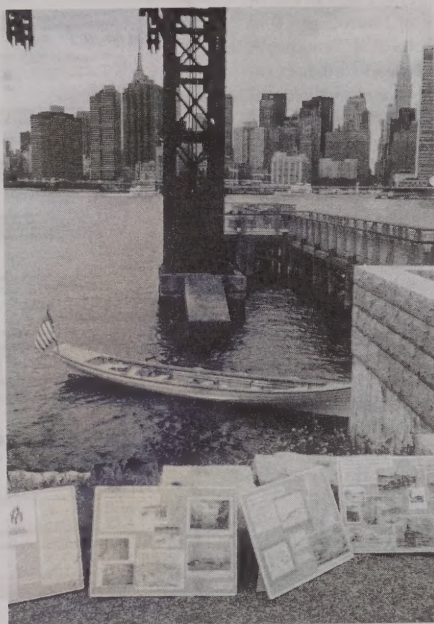
boat builders and advocator extraordinaire for access onto New York City's rivers and harbor.

The first two events herein were part of East River Rising, a month-long calendar of activities coordinated by the Metropolitan Waterfront to draw attention to the untapped potential of our East River, a 22 mile long tidal strait. East River Rising's dozen or so events, which also included East River C.R.E.W.'s Catch & Release fishing contest at the East 106th Street Pier, culminated on the Fourth of July, where the river is annually center of attention as the launching site for Macy's Independence Day Fireworks.

The third event described is East River C.R.E.W.'s annual Hook to Hook row, from Red Hook Brooklyn to our home community near East 906, Street, Manhattan.



Mike Davis, founder of Floating the Apple, on bow oar and Bronya Weinberg on stroke approaching the gantries for which Gantry State Park is named.



The Whitehall gig *Magnus* cross-tied at Gantry State Park. In the foreground are East River C.R.E.W.'s exhibit boards.

The June 6th Row to Gantry State Park was to be a warm-up for East River C.R.E.W.'s Fourth of July Dawn Row Up the East River, another event on the calendar of East River Rising.

East River C.R.E.W. and Floating the Apple planned for the coxed four Whitehall rowing gig *Magnus* to row from Red Hook, Brooklyn to the Gantry State Park on the river in Long Island City, Queens and back for the Wednesday afternoon event.

Floating the Apple, one of the pioneer groups in our region's youth rowing and boat building movement, provided logistical guidance, and for several years as well they have helped house and maintain *Saint Davids*, a Whitehall gig built by students and East River C.R.E.W.'s co-founder, Tori Gilbert.

Lynn Grace, director of the sponsoring organization The Community Environmental Center, arranged to transport our exhibit "Rowboats Past, Present & Future on the East & Harlem River" (see *MAIB* Feb. 1, 2000) for display and to meet the incoming Whitehall gig. Other sponsoring groups included The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, Floating the Apple, East River Apprenticeshop, and Rocking the Boat.

Rowers included Mike Davis, founder of Floating the Apple, Bronya Weinberg, Ethan Yankowitz, George Rodenhausen, and this writer for the trip up river. Don Betts, Carter Craft and his Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance interns Blake McDowell & Emily Barabas, and I rowed the return back to Red Hook.

At present, rowing trips like these must involve meticulous planning. To begin with, organizers must insure a correct number of rowers, 5 to 7 per boat, time departures and arrivals with the tides according to the *annual Eldridge Tide and Pilot Book*, and secure permissions at destinations. On occasion, boats are also shuttled by water in advance to various boathouses to be available the day a longer row is scheduled.

Prior to each row, both East River C.R.E.W. and Floating the Apple require Float Plan/Cruise Reports completed by the designated coxswain, and insurance waivers on file for each rower and passenger. Other necessities include assuring that each gig is equipped with appropriate oars, thole pins and rings, rudder with tiller or yoke, PFDs, horn, first aid kit, water bottles, drain plugs, bow & stern lines, lines associated with the davit, hats, sunscreen, sometimes food for rowers, and an-

A delicate landing at Gantry State Park.





chor if needed. And this doesn't even include any optional sailing gear!

Use of VHF marine radio is widespread and recommended for coxswains, and awareness and avoidance of commercial river traffic is a top priority.

We remind rowers, especially new ones, that "the tide waits for no one", and the most difficult part of a rowing excursion may be getting to the departure location, especially one not normally used by the individual involved. Also difficult for busy and over-committed youth, adults, and parents, is the realization that a no-show can jeopardize a day's rowing for the rest of the crew.

Everyone arrived in time for our 7:30am departure and we were on the water and got to enjoy that amazing feeling we work so hard for; no motors, no office paper, just water, scenery, sky, and the sounds and curves of a wooden boat. An hour later, having rowed past the Statue of Liberty and Governor's Island, and under the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, we arrived at Long Island City.

Thanks to advice from Floating the Apple's ever-ingenious Don Betts, we anchored the *Magnus* stern with a long line, rowed softly to shore in the wide space between the two gigantic gantry structures, pulled in the slack on the anchor line, and disembarked from the bow, where it just touched the rocky landing area. Then, by walking upriver about 20' with the bow line, we secured our gig floating in a cross-tied position where it was in no danger of damage from the rocky bulkhead or the pilings of the gantries.

Gantries are turn-of-the-century industrial structures engineered to lift railroad freight cars off ferries and onto railroad tracks, in this case destined for locations further out on Long Island. Although they are now preserved as historic artifacts, and a park is dedicated to their memory, access via boats is not yet included in Gantry State Park's facilities or mission, and hence the lengthy round of conversations and permissions required in advance for landing.

Once on shore, we set up our rowing exhibit, proceeded to explain our history and activities to school groups and individuals passing by, and took turns visiting the other groups' displays. It's remarkable for New Yorkers on opposite sides of the East River to calculate how much longer it takes to cross via vehicular means versus human-powered boats. We spoke with videographer Keith Rodan who is also actively working with the nearby Greenpoint, Brooklyn community to improve their parks, and restore access to the East River and its tributary the Newtown Creek.

Pete Seeger, legendary folksinger, songwriter, environmentalist, and founder of Clearwater, headlined a midday concert with a diverse audience of school children, community residents, parks officials, supporters of parks and waterfront, along with construction workers from a nearby high-rise building site. Background for the outdoor gantry-stage was the United Nations Building in Manhattan, directly across the East River.

I was surprised to be asked on-the-spot to speak to the concert audience about our rowing gig *Magnus*, East River C.R.E.W. and Floating the Apple, and told of the 14-year old coxswain, John Magnus and his famous race of 1824. I was later delighted that some of the footage made it off the proverbial cutting room



Writer Mary Nell Hawk sharing with local school children some of the fun and facts of "messaging about in boats".

Karl Schuman, Carter Craft, and Don Betts. Carter is Director of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance [www.waterwire.net](http://www.waterwire.net), a great web site. Don Betts is a volunteer and much-appreciated builder of more or less 20 Whitehall gigs with Floating the Apple, including ten with youth groups.



floor, and into Keith Rodan's finished video.

After the concert, precisely 2pm as per dictates of the tide chart, we departed with our crew to Red Hook, assisted on the final leg of the seven-mile return by the wind and a traditional sail Don Betts had set. Sailing Whitehall gigs is an activity widely illustrated in 19th century prints of the harbor, and it is suspected that almost all the early rowing gigs did carry mast and sails for use with favorable breezes. We do not often do so on our rowing gigs, so sailing was a special finale to a great day.

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With this June 6th event having served as practice run, we were ready for our Fourth of July Dawn Row Up the East River, another event on the calendar of East River Rising. We used the word "Dawn" as a reminder, since the tide on Independence Day 2001 was such that we had to reach our two destinations, Greenpoint, Brooklyn and Stuy Cove, at East 25th Street, Manhattan, for the slack water hour at about 9am. The good news was that rowers would be back to the boathouse by

3pm, giving them time for other activities, and getting us off the river prior to the congestion of boats gathering to view fireworks from the water.

The weather forecast was for clouds and rain, and we were scheduled to leave Red Hook by 7am. A flurry of phone calls and emails the night before determined that we were down from the two boats reserved, to crew for only one boat. The hearty showed up with rain gear early the next morning, we had

our bagels and juice, and assembled the crew of six including Lissa Wolfe, Bronya Weinberg, George Roddenhausen, Hannah Borgeson, Kerith Gardner, and myself. Hannah impressed us all, having arrived by bicycle from C.R.E.W.'s home turf in the East 80s, across the Queensboro Bridge, and all the way to Red Hook, a distance of about fifteen miles!

As we pushed off and rowed past Lady Liberty and along Buttermilk Channel, which separates Governor's Island from Brooklyn, the drizzle stopped and we were treated to the East River, free of commercial and commuter ferry traffic on this misty holiday morning, quiet and as smooth as glass. Even on the marine radio, we heard hardly a word.

The six-mile distance, with the current, was more of a glide, and we arrived on schedule at our first stop, the foot of Manhattan Avenue, Greenpoint, Brooklyn, just off the East River on Newtown Creek, which separates Brooklyn from neighboring Queens County to the north. This is the site of a very precious deck and ladder, handmade by artist George Takas, and one of the very few access points to the water anywhere along the East River. At present, however, no davit exists in Greenpoint for hoisting Whitehall rowing gigs in and out of the water.

Local residents greeted us warmly as they continued crabbing, and directed us to where we needed to go. Later in the summer, Chris Lets, a guest speaker at the River Project confirmed that local crabs really are edible, if you wash off the dark colored parts after you crack open the steamed crab. Just don't try to eat local oysters.

Moments later, Tori Gilbert and Chris Maksymovich arrived by car with our Rowing Exhibit which they would display in support of Greenpoint's annual 4th of July Festival, held in a public park 25 yards from the water, but with no access to or view of the water due to lumber storage on adjacent city-owned land. A little socializing, some photos, and a little more eating, then we were back on the water, and Tori, Chris, and gear continued making way to the nearby Festival site.

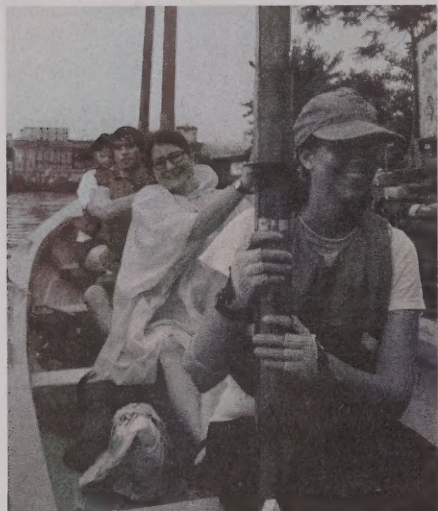
The narrow Newtown Creek was once one of America's ten largest ports in terms of tonnage landed, and we agreed we would like to return and row further upstream, perhaps to see the swans recently photographed on this once terribly polluted tributary.

Since three of our July 4th rowers were new to the East River, we opted instead to continue a mile or so up the East River, past the aforementioned Gantry State Park opposite the United Nations, then under the Queensboro (59th Street) Bridge, back south along Roosevelt Island past VIP bleachers in place for the evening's fireworks, and further down on the flat water to Stuyvesant Cove, East 23rd Street, Manhattan, directly across from our first stop on the Newtown Creek. We crossed the channel one more time to stop back briefly in Greenpoint and then returned the six miles south to Red Hook Brooklyn on the by then ebbing tide.

As promised, the rowers were back by 3pm and all agreed that damp weather can create an unexpectedly pleasant environment on the water, a thick warm quietness that counters all we expect from what is normally one of our nation's most heavily trafficked waterways.



Top: George Roddenhausen, Kerith Gardner and Hannah Borgeson row past the United Nation's school, far right, and on down the river.



Left: Lissa Wolfe, George Roddenhausen, Kerith Gardner, and Hannah Borgeson toss oars on Newtown Creek, a salute to artist George Takas' handmade deck and ladder, one of only a few landing spots on the East River.

Bottom: Locals wave hello from the Manhattan Avenue street-end in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.





A main goal of East River C.R.E.W.'s Third Annual Hook to Hook Row on August 25th was to explore an esplanade landing spot upriver at East 96th Street Manhattan, instead of our usual destination of East 90th Street. The goal is to work with the NYC Department of Transportation, in addition to our friends at

other agencies, to obtain a davit on the esplanade, and a shipping container under the FDR Highway, to provide access and boat storage necessary for a rowing program in this uptown neighborhood. Any *MAIB* readers willing to assist in this advocacy would be more than welcome!

Once we departed Horn's Hook, the nearest spot on either shore to disembark and also take our rowing boats out of the water was our original departure point, the Erie Basin in Red Hook Brooklyn, 10.5 miles down the East River!



They don't look like they've just rowed 10.5 miles upon arrival at East 96th Street.



Experienced rowers from East River C.R.E.W. and Floating the Apple, assist community members on a spontaneous short excursion.

Whitehall gig *Legend* resting at East 96th Street. Access is via rope ladder.



Hook to Hook rowers returning to Red Hook. Whitehall gig *Legend* is coxed by boatbuilder and teacher Brendan Malone.



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Across the street from our house, on the Charles River, lounged a brown-shingled boathouse which bore on its back the name, Waltham Odd Fellows Hall. A huge swaying planked apron stretched over the river bank providing a launching pad for canoes, rowboats, and racing shells. The boats rested, gunwales down, on wooden racks, one over another in ranks of three, extending far into and behind the wide doors that rolled open with a rumble we could hear from our front porch.

The boathouse and everything pertaining thereto was magic. As a girl of ten or eleven, I could sit on the slope and watch the Charles glide or roll by, or watch the owner, Jim Bergen, slosh soapy water over the gleaming varnish, paint and gold scrolls of an upturned canoe, souse it with clear water, and sponge it carefully. The keel and ribs of these canoes were hand-sawn, planed and bent, thwarted hand-carved and fitted. The canvas was cut, stretched and hand-painted. The gunwale's raking curves were elegant with dark green, red or blue colors and the boats moved through the water as effortlessly as swans.

Jim Bergen was a good paddle carver, and his store of them leaned against the wall in a corner of the office at the edge of the wharf. Tall paddles, middle sized, and "shorties" gleamed pale yellow. They were so inviting, that before touching one, you knew how easily your hand would slide along the handles, how satisfying the curves would feel.



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# On the Charles In the 1920s

Reprinted with permission of the Charles River Watershed Association.

(This is part of a three-part series on the Charles written by Barbara Winslow who grew up on the Charles)

## Part I. The Boathouse

I dimly remember one night being held up to the window of the bedroom I shared with my sister Frances to see red flames soaring into the night sky and reflected on the water of the Charles when one of the boathouses burned. The spectacular fire was nearly a funeral pyre for canoeing because that boathouse was not rebuilt, and the damage to Jim Bergen's property took a long time to repair, especially to replace the canoes. By the time they were ready, the day of the canoe had passed and public fancy had veered another way. It became rare to see a canoe drifting in the morning twilight, the bandstand on Fox Island fell to pieces, and the regattas were no longer held. Jim all too often washed and cared for his canoes, sliding and heaving them back

onto their racks, without them having been wetted in the Charles.

Jim's wharf always had been, and continued to be, a gathering place on summer evenings for local men and boys. Only. No girls allowed. I know cusswords were used over there, and expect the camaraderie turned into real language at times. Jim was a good storyteller when he got going. His cronies could hold their own, too. A lot of spit and tobacco juice spiced the Charles' current. It was prohibition days, but in cellars around Waltham, Dandelion, Dago and Concord grape wine was certainly being brewed, and there were rumors of home brew blowing caps and corks.

I think my father knew the smell of alcohol, although he didn't know the substance. The wharf was forbidden territory for me after supper. Evenings, pressing my forehead against the bedroom window screen, I could see the glow of light bulbs over the boat doors, the waxing and waning of cigar and cigarette tips, and hear the rumble of men's voices punctuated by muted crows of laughter. I could hear the hail as a late canoeist brought his craft alongside the wharf, and the rasp and slither of paddle and canoe on the boards; watch and hear Jim cross to the office to put paddles away, hear the goodnights and the sharp sounds of car doors opening and slamming shut. On summer evenings, I used to go to sleep with those sounds. They, too, were a part of the river and all that it meant to me.

## What is CRWA?

One of the country's first watershed organizations, Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) was formed in 1965 in response to public concern about the declining condition of the Charles. Since its earliest days of advocacy, CRWA has figured prominently in major clean-up and watershed protection efforts, working with government officials and citizen groups from 35 watershed towns from Hopkinton to Boston. Initiatives over the last three decades have dramatically improved the quality of water in the watershed and approaches to watershed management.

## CRWA Works To:

Develop a sound, science-based understanding of interactions in the watershed that affect the river.

Promote sustainable watershed management practices with government agencies and private entities.

Advocate protection, revitalization, and expansion of public parklands along the Charles.

Define long-term, cutting-edge solutions to watershed problems.

## Here's Where CRWA Is Making a Difference:

River Access: CRWA advocates protection, revitalization and expansion of river parklands. Highlighting improvement in the

Charles and promoting recreational uses, CRWA's annual Run of the Charles Canoe and Kayak Race draws over 1,800 participants and hundreds of volunteers for a fun day on the river.

Watershed Management: CRWA advises towns, particularly those with high growth rates, about managing fresh water supplies and wastewater treatment, and private entities about building plans and site selection that minimize impact on the watershed and on flow levels in the river. CRWA's goal is to increase water retention and aquifer recharge in the watershed.

Advocacy: Aided by its year-round water quality monitoring program at 37 sites along the river, CRWA identifies illegal polluting discharges flowing into the river and lakes and makes sure they are corrected. CRWA also promotes reduction of sewer overflows and stormwater runoff, and regulatory support for watershed

Research: CRWA's comprehensive five-year study about interactions in the watershed provides valuable data for decision-makers. An in-house lab and expanded computer modeling and mapping capabilities enhance the quality of CRWA's research.

Education and Technical Assistance: CRWA-sponsored forums bring together watershed stakeholders to address important issues. CRWA's newsletter *Streamers* and its website convey river-related news; its flags in the Lower Basin signal water quality conditions for boaters. CRWA provides laboratory, computer modeling, and mapping services to other groups.

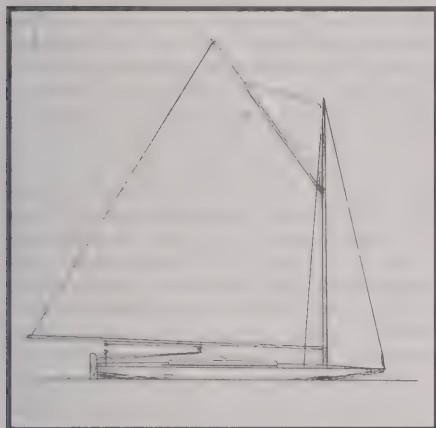
CRWA ; 2391 Commonwealth Ave., Auburndale, MA 02466-1773, (617) 965-5975, <[crwa@crwa.org](mailto:crwa@crwa.org)>, [www.crwa.org](http://www.crwa.org)



# Looking Back...

By Bill Gamblin

## Planing in Lark



The first boat that I actually owned was the *Lark*. She was built to a design put out by *Rudder* magazine in 1905, and advertised in it at least until 1951, perhaps longer, since I stopped taking *Rudder* at that time, and started taking *Yachting World*. She cost me \$30, which in 1937 meant most of my savings in the Canada Permanent Mortgage Corp. I was lucky, in that my father had started a savings account for me when I was a month old, and I had added to it when it was possible. Don't forget that this was 1937 and a dollar was really a dollar in those days! A teller in a bank earned a dollar a day at that time! Don Holder and I had just finished a Snipe, called *Halcyon*, for Bill Blyler, who found himself the owner of two boats, *Halcyon* and *Lark*. I was without a boat, and with \$30 in the bank, so I became a boat owner!

The *Lark* was a scow, 16' long by 5-1/2' beam, and very shallow. She was arc bottomed with straight vertical topsides whose depth varied from 10" maximum to 3"-6" at the bow and stern. The bow was 3" deep by about 4' wide, rounded and typically scow shaped! She was cat rigged with a gaff mainsail that was quite ordinary when she was designed but became a bit out of date by 1937, and today looks like something out of the Ark!

For example, her boom overhung her stern some 4'! To ease off the clew lashing I had to set her alongside a float or get into a tender and work from it! The rudder and the gaff jaws were not well designed, so I went to work and made a rudder, similar to the one I had built for *Halcyon*, and the replacement for the gaff jaws was a gaff saddle like I'd seen on other boats, which I made out of sheet brass lined with rawhide. These replacements worked very well!

Every Saturday afternoon, if it wasn't raining, I would take off for Belyea's Point, about 10 miles upriver. Sometimes I would be alone but often there would be one or two other boats from our small boat fleet along and we would sail together. They would be heading either for Belyea's Point, or Carter's Point, or one of the numerous anchorages within a half day's run of the club. We would anchor in

the lee of the point and wade ashore to visit friends who were spending the summer at their cottage.

The *Lark* was never intended to be a cruising dinghy. The cockpit was about 6' x 2', but it was only about 16" deep including the depth of the coamings. It was divided in two by the centreboard box, part of a full length building jig. This meant that sleeping space was at an absolute minimum, in fact I wonder now how I slept at all but with a boom-tent and a blanket I had no trouble!

The return trip to the club on Sundays could involve almost anything. I towed a boat home that had broken its mast in Grand Bay. I ran aground on Brandy Point before I learned that the buoy, which seemed a long way off, was telling the truth, the point is really that long, and very shallow! I found out how great it was to slip over the stern on the end of the main sheet and be towed along at 3 or 4 knots on a hot summers day! I should mention that the *Lark* was very stable, quite good at self steering, and her mainsail was powerful, so the tasks of towing another boat, or her own skipper were easy!

Aboard *Lark* I spent a good many days exploring the Saint John and Kennebecasis Rivers. Mind you there are a number of things

that come to mind when she is mentioned, including her "brakes". With such a shallow bow, and a bit of wind in the sail, the weight of her skipper on the bow would make it go completely under water and slow her down very effectively!

One weekend I stopped in at Pamdenec, a popular summer resort on the northwest shore of Grand Bay. It was blowing quite freshly when we arrived and it continued to freshen while we stayed there. When it was time to leave, it was blowing about 25 knots but since we were on the upwind shore we were in a protected area because of the hills and trees around Pamdenec. Once we were out of the shadow of the hills and had the full force of the wind on our starboard quarter we really took off!

This was something beyond ordinary sailing! *Lark* went across Grand Bay like a stone being skipped across a pond! I couldn't keep from yelling because it was such a fantastic trip! *Lark* sat up with her nose in the air and went like the proverbial bat as she raced to the club! If I'd been asked then about our speed as we crossed the bay I'd have given an exaggerated answer, but after I cooled off the best estimate was 15+ knots! That was a sail I'll never forget!



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## True North To The Door (Conclusion)

By Moby Nick

Wednesday morning the wind was building to fresh by the time we were ready to get underway. Tacking out of Detroit Harbor channel is not a good idea when you have to share it with several ferries, so we motored the mile across the harbor, and continued out the channel to set sail outside. However, the lee shore of Washington Island, two to three foot seas from across the Port De Mort, and general mayhem of ferry wakes, along with the prospect of a long sail to windward, persuaded this Moby skipper that these were not optimum circumstances for setting sail and that perhaps we ought to just motor down to Horseshoe Island, two hours at half-throttle south of Detroit Harbor.

The cove at Horseshoe Island is a favorite anchorage because it is secluded from the hustle and bustle of the peninsula. For most wind directions, especially storms from the west or northwest, it is very secure. When we arrived it was instantly apparent that the fresh southerly winds were a whole 'nuther deal, south being the one direction the cove cannot tolerate.

So we continued south to Shanty Bay over at nearby Peninsula State Park, perhaps the most popular anchorage on the peninsula. After rigging the bimini, a cooling swim was next on the agenda. The heat hadn't let up a bit. There is a large swimming beach at the park for the campers and there were hundreds of people in the water, along with a few dogs. The sand follows the shallow bottom quite a ways out into the anchorage so there are hundreds of boaters swimming, too. Many boats having keels which keep them in deeper water all have inflatables over the side. It is an amazing scene.

Thursday morning it was time for one of my favorite tricks, beaching *True North* so we could use the showers. The sight of a 28' yawl with her bow pulled up dry on the beach always stimulates a reaction from someone. This time it was a retired couple who had a motor home in the campground. It turned out that they also fly a light plane together at home in California.

By late morning the wind was fresher from the south than any day so far. Since Fish Creek, our objective beyond the south side of the state park, was only several miles away, I elected to sail under jib and mizzen, even though *True North* is not at her best beating without the main. Two and a half hours later we were still several tacks away from Fish Creek, and we had wanted to be there noonish

to meet another boat from the Rockford Yacht Club. The wind was tapering off, leaving the water lumpy, so we furled sail, fired up the Yammerhammer, and motored into Fish Creek. An attendant on the municipal pier said that a storm was expected and perhaps we might want the last slip. Good idea! The last slip turned out to be on a short floating pier on which the opposite side served as their fuel dock.

Sure enough, Ron and Gayle Jepsen had launched before we arrived and had *Gay-Leann* tied up in a slip at nearby Alibi Marina. And they'd brought copious amounts of snack food for their two sons, high school and college age, with enough left over for guests.

After a snack-time shower had moved on, we all decided to try some sailing, though not at all sure the light breeze would hold. As usual for these waters in August, it didn't, but we were treated to some fine views of a junk-rigged Colvin Gazelle which takes small groups of tourists out of Fish Creek for three-hour sails.

When the water turned to glass, both boats motored over to Shanty Bay for a swim. The scene was shore-to-shore boats again, but we located sufficient room to raft up and had a fine splash party, anyway. We were anchored in four feet of water and could walk the bottom anywhere, including ashore. Of course we spent most of the afternoon in the water.

Later that evening Gayle and I, along with the four Jepsens, found one of Fish Creek's fine restaurants. Dinner was followed by an energetic walk through some of Fish Creek's many fine shops. Both Gayles are known to be dangerous around shops.

Returning to the boat three hours later, we found *True North* tugging frantically at her mooring lines. The wind had freshened considerably from the northwest, with boat and floating pier being rudely bounced around in a nasty chop. Readjusting lines helped little, but shortening everything, with fenders jammed tightly to the pier seemed least worst.

There was one of those ugly 30' I-O motor cruisers with a deep-V bottom, way too much freeboard, and a drooping pointy snout moored at the fueling area on the opposite side of our pier. It had not been there when we left for town earlier. Being on the windward side of the pier, this beast was really rocking around in the chop. When its party returned, I was surprised to see them prepare for departure. They seemed to have had just a tad too much alcohol lubrication in their systems for boat handling in this sort of weather. Somehow, after several attempts, they got their miserable vessel away from the bucking pier and roared off into the blackness toward open water; Egg Harbor I'd heard one of them shout.

Sleep was impossible. Shearwater just doesn't have enough mass to dampen the sort of motion we were being subjected to. Gayle soon abandoned her berth in favor of a stationary couch up in the Harbormaster's Office. A while later I discovered that reclining in the cockpit was more restful than the salon berths, but the sound of our three burgees whipping madly from the starboard shroud was too distracting for sleep. While I was untangling them, one foot on the bucking boat, the other on the wildly bucking pier to windward, our Trailer Sailor burgee was blown right out of my hands! Oh well, the shore was only yards leeward. Somehow, I was actually able to sleep a couple of hours before dawn. However, a search among the boats berthed downwind, and along the shoreline, failed turn up our TS burgee.

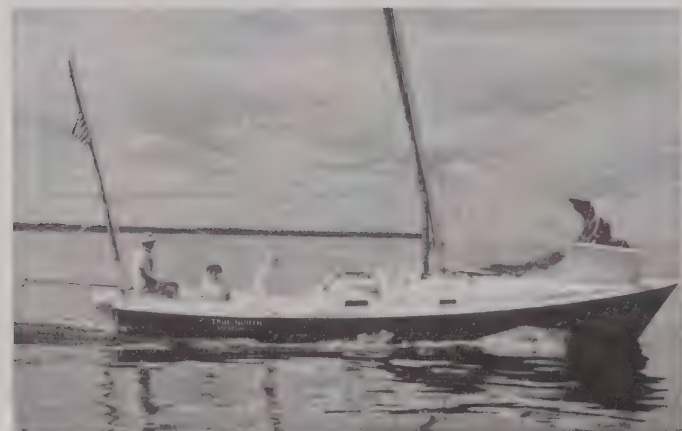
The northwest wind did not abate until after lunch. When it did so, the Jepsens' Lancer 25 and our Shearwater cast off for a sail, waltzing around with the Gazelle again. The wind died much too soon.

Furling sail, both boats again motored around to Shanty Bay for another swim. The weather front had brought more comfortable temperature and humidity.

One motor cruiser at Shanty Bay was noteworthy; a 40' Roemer, built in Michigan in the early sixties. She had an extended family of twelve aboard for a week (some of them may have booked rooms in a nearby motel) and Grampa was the skipper. I'd met him earlier that morning over at our marina while we were waiting for the wind to calm down to manageable levels. What stood out about this vessel was the lack of a flying bridge. The inside helm, its deck sunken a bit below the foredeck, gave her an unusually low profile, quite in contrast to every other powerboat in

True North headed for Shanty Bay.

Gay-LE-Ann trying to keep up.





sight.

Yet the Roemer's lines, unlike the *Angus*, were fairly modern; clearly a planing hull. A chrome-plated spotlight, centered atop the roof over the helm, contributed to a business-casual appearance. The house roof aft of the helm dropped a bit to a sundeck over the saloon, and was bordered on three sides by railings. But without a bimini, there was nothing to raise the overall lines of the house/deck, nor spoil the line of foredeck, side decks, and cockpit rail, aft of the house. Unlike most other classic motor cruisers people take great pride in these days, this all white Roemer exhibited no brightwork.

Sailors, of course, are not supposed to like powerboats, and compared to the *Angus*, this Roemer, with her average bow flare, average white finish, average chrome trim, average pair of gasoline engines, and average white transom (not even Deep-Vee for crying-out-loud) might appear undistinguished. Somehow I considered her worthwhile; Gramps didn't keep her that long without a reason.

We returned to our respective marinas in Fish Creek and a short while later joined the Jepsens for tacos at an outdoor Mexican cafe. Shopping afterward was cut short due to lack of sleep the previous night.

Saturday morning the Jepsens planned to daysail a party of guests from Rockford, so Gayle and I set out for Chambers Island, lying west, midway between the Door Peninsula and Michigan's Upper Peninsula; you know, where "Dem Youpers" come from. Chamber's Island is privately owned by a Catholic religious order which conducts retreats for sizeable groups.

One beach in a cove on the northwest side of the island was well populated by day-tripping boats from both Michigan and Wisconsin. On a walk into the interior Gayle and I encountered several small groups of retreaters. We also saw a Cessna 172 make a good landing in gusty winds on an undulating grass runway. As a student pilot, myself, I was impressed.

Our curiosity concerning Chamber's Island sated, we set sail for Shanty Bay. Gayle had the helm for most of the twenty miles we sailed, reaching out to the island and back at about full speed for our Shearwater yawl. This was even better than the first day because the temperatures averaged twenty degrees cooler.

This time we anchored *True North* further in where we could wade ashore, yet keep our shorts dry. This was good for a walk around through a portion of the campground at sunset, as well as for showers ashore next morning.

Sunday morning, after a leisurely breakfast, we set out for Sister Bay. *True North* reached across a light westerly breeze under main and mizzen only. It was only four miles, and we were in no real hurry to take the boat out of the water, so why go faster? Halfway along we were slowly overtaken by a beautiful stout-looking white ketch moving sedately under white mizzen and jib. The solo skipper, with a full white beard and wavy white hair, was dressed in white slacks and shirt. The only things not white were the extensive teak brightwork and a blue bimini. Does Santa Claus spend summers sailing in Wisconsin? I called across that his vessel looked to me something like a Herreshoff 28. Santa replied that she was his next larger model, (did he say H-30, or 32?) and a steady-sailing old lady,

for sure. It was a pleasure to see him leave the helm unattended while he went forward to prepare anchor gear.

Like the *Angus* earlier in the week, and the Roemer whose name I did not note, this Herreshoff ketch reflected elemental truth.

Putting our Shearwater back on her trailer and rigging for the road was all done at a relaxed pace because, at midday, it wasn't all that cool.

The ride home was uneventful, except when a pedal-happy youngster, following too close in a line of traffic on I-43, closed the gap with a light bump we could feel in the

truck. Traffic wasn't moving anywhere at that point, so I got out and walked back to find that *True North's* rudder, unscathed, had left a lasting impression on the hood of his car. Flipping him a business card, I mentioned that I'd signaled him to follow with more interval, but now his hood was pretty well screwed. Edey & Duff sure build tough boats; but then, we already knew that.

Faire Winds, Y'awl, Moby Nick

P.S. At our regular Rockford Yacht Club meeting a week later, Don Jepsen returned my Trailer Sailor burgee, which he had found posted on the marina bulletin board.



The junk at Fish Creek.



The Roemer in Shanty Bay.

Santa's Herreshoff ketch.





Day 14, Sunday, May 20, 2001  
Solomons, Maryland, to Harris Creek, Dun  
Cove, Maryland

Weighing anchor at 5:40 AM in calm wind and two-mile visibility fog and made my way out into the Patuxent River. About 6:20, turned NE toward Cove Point along with a lot of sport fishing boats heading out to fish. Cove Point Road is where I lived for those seven years in the 1970s. The road ends at Cove Point Lighthouse which is now visible flashing its light. The water would be nearly flat if it weren't for those powerboats speeding toward their favorite fishing spot. Just before :007, we are two miles SSE of Cove Point and turning north toward Tilghman Island. I decided not to stop at Little Choptank River tonight, but rather head for the final anchorage 33 miles ahead.

A tug and barge are southbound and we pass about a mile from each other. I count 12 sport fishing boats. By 7:20 I am abeam Cove Point and the huge LNG terminal offshore piers. My home was right across the street from the LNG terminal. The wind is still calm and my speed is 4.5 knots. I am somewhat concerned that I am nearing the main ship channel in this poor visibility. Will I be able to avoid an embarrassing tag game? Those big ships don't stop for the likes of me! I begin monitoring the VHF bridge-to-bridge frequency, channel 13.

The foghorn on the LNG terminal pier is quite loud and has three harmonic tones, which also harmonize with the drone of my diesel engine. I begin to sing loudly in harmony with the horn and the diesel, "Please wind, will you help me?" Over and over I sing that phrase until I am almost hoarse. My speed under power is now 4.7.

I see a container ship which passes me about 500 yards to starboard northbound; we are heading for the same mid-channel buoy which the ship will use to make a slight turn. Now there is no doubt where the shipping lane is and when I reach the buoy "CP" I will cross over the lane out of danger. The shipping lane is vastly different in the southern bay because the water is so deep most of the way across that only an occasional mid-channel buoy is set. In the northern half of the bay, the bay is shallow except for a narrow shipping lane, which is clearly marked.

Upon reaching the buoy "CP," I find that it has a large orange ball on top of the lantern with a sea gull perched on it. I take a picture. I am not sure why the ball is there, it is a new innovation since I retired from the Coast

## Circumnavigation 2001

### A Journal of a Circumnavigation of the Delmarva Peninsula

#### Part 9

By John Potts



Last two days' routes.

Guard. The depth at the buoy is 74'.

At 9:20, the wind starts to blow from the SE at about 8 knots. I fly all sails and secure the engine. My new speed is 3.7, which increases by 10:15 to 6 knots! The wind is slowly increasing speed and by 10:15 it is shifting from the east and is up to 20 knots. I furl the genoa and go it under mainsail. The seas are 2' to 3' and I am now making about 4.4 knots. Around noon, I am heading north behind Tilghman Island with the easterly wind having plenty of room to blow out of the Choptank

River, a fetch of some 10 miles. I arrive at the mouth of Harris Creek about 12:15 and lower the main and proceed on engine power. There is a Chesapeake Bay classic skipjack underway and under full sail. I take some photos, what a beautiful sight. I anchor at 12:45 in Dun Cove off Harris Creek behind Tilghman Island on Maryland's eastern shore. The depth is 8.3'.

Today's trip was 33 miles in 7 hours with 4 hours 10 minutes on the engine and 2 hours and 50 minutes under sail. I call Sandee and let her know I am anchored in the last anchorage and will see her tomorrow more than likely. The forecast for tomorrow indicates that the winds may be challenging, so I reef the main now while I can. It will be easier to unreef if it is not needed, but impossible to reef in a stiff breeze underway alone.

I would like to have anchored in a narrow sheltered cove on the north side of Dun Cove, but it looked crowded with three sloops already anchored there. I anchored in a spot I hoped would be sheltered from southeast winds, which were forecast for the night. I empty the two spare diesel fuel containers into the main tank and brought the fuel gauge to the full line. Now I won't be bringing any spare fuel back, terrific estimate of fuel. I only fueled once from a fuel dock on day 3 in the C&D Canal. So far I have burned about 13 gallons of fuel, not bad, I'd say! Eat your heart out, gas guzzlin' power boaters!

Since the trip is only going to take 15 days, I brought about three times more clothes, food, and water than I needed. At this point I am committed to hauling the boat upon return and selling it. I paid \$6995 for it in 1995, and since then I have put many upgrades into her. I will start asking \$11,500 and be happy if I get \$10,500.

It is now 6:00 PM and the wind is out of the east at 18 to 25 knots. I am NOT anchored in the lee and the chop is very uncomfortable, the anchor rode is constantly under strain and the boat is swinging wildly. I am concerned about riding like this all night. The wind is supposed to be from the southeast, not the east! The rigging is screaming at me.

The air temp is 60 degrees and the shower bags are cold. I heat some water on the stove and pour it into a bag and take my last shower of the voyage in the cockpit. The wind is cold but the water is warm.

It is raining and still blowing like crazy. I am getting desperate to correct the situation before dark. At 7:00 PM I don rain gear, start the engine, and raise the anchor to the water's

Cove Point Lighthouse in fog.



LNG Terminal Cove Point in fog.





edge, leaving it stopped off at the cleat for a fast resetting. I quickly maneuver the boat about 100 yards to the south in a small but very shallow cove, watching and listening very closely to the fathometer. The cove is surrounded on three sides by large trees and it does seem fairly protected from the wind and sea; however, the reason I did not anchor here in the first place is the shallow water showing on the chart.

I proceed until the water gets down to 4' and then backtrack and anchor in 5.5'. I have never anchored in so shallow a place. I now have 2.5' of water under the keel. Off the stern, just 10' away, is REAL shallow water, which would not provide the required 3' of clearance. Ninety feet beyond the shoal is a wooden sea wall protecting a home's yard. Fortunately, the water is low and rising now, but there is only about a 2' to 3' tidal range in this part of the world. That is one of the advantages to boating in the Bay area, not having to deal with large ranges of tide and the accompanying currents.

It sure is calmer here and no wind howling through the rigging straining the anchor rode. I just hope I didn't trade one problem for another, wind for shallow water! I can actually see the bottom here! Of course I did sail in Chincoteague Bay in 4' to 6' of water and never touched bottom. This is a piece of cake! A fitting last night on the *Sandee Lee*!

(To Be Continued)

Buoy "CP," strange seagull perch.



Classic Chesapeake Bay skipjack.



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## "Lonely Sentinels of the Sea-Lanes":

Lightships owe their origin to ancient Roman's early galleys providing lighted beacons, deterring pirates.

Lightships, as we commonly know or remember them, have been around little more than two centuries, though a prototype existed in the ancient world. During the last few centuries BC, Roman coast guard galleys carried at their mastheads open framework baskets in which a fire sometimes was built, serving as a signal light. Manned by an armed crew, such vessels patrolled the Roman coasts to guide and protect incoming vessels by providing a beacon and to deter piracy by showing that a warship was at hand. But, since the prudent Roman sailor tried to avoid nighttime voyages whenever possible, the first lightships never attained the importance of their successors.

By the 18th century, however, maritime commerce had become a 24-hour-a-day undertaking, with ships ranging the entire globe. In 1731, Robert Hamblin, an Englishman, obtained permission from King George II to outfit what would become the first modern lightship. His single-masted vessel was given the name *Nore* and took up its position a year later in England at Nore Sands in the Thames estuary. Resembling a small fishing sloop, *Nore* carried two ship's lanterns, hung 12' apart from a cross arm high above the deck wherein burned flat wicks in oil. The *Nore's* log lists several accounts of almost futile struggles to keep the lanterns lit during any appreciable strength of wind, still, ship's masters considered the lightship a godsend, and similar vessels soon entered similar service off the coasts of most every seafaring nation.

**First U.S. Lightship Enters Service:** At least six lightships were in use off England's coasts before the United States even ventured into the concept of lightships. The first U.S. contract was awarded in 1819 to John Pool of Hampton, Va., for a vessel of "...70 tons burthen, copper-fastened, a cabin with four berths, at least ...spars, a capstan, belfry, yawl and davits..." Delivered in the summer of 1820, this first "light boat" was initially stationed off Willoughby Spit, Virginia, as an aid to Chesapeake Bay commerce. Storms and heavy seas, however, scoured this exposed position, and the vessel had to be shifted to a safer anchorage off Craney Island, near Norfolk, Virginia. Within a year, four more lightships appeared, marking dangerous shoals in the Cheapeake. America's first true "outside" lightship, anchored in the open sea instead of in a bay or inlet, entered service off Sandy Hook, New Jersey in 1823.

The lightship proved as successful on this side of the Atlantic as it had on the other. During the period 1820-1883, 116 lightship stations were established by the United States at one time or another. This figure includes those stations that were renamed and moved to a different position to better serve the same purpose, and those taken over later by Canada. The number of stations existing at any one time peaked in 1909 when 56 lightships were maintained. By 1927, 68 stations had been discontinued, replaced by lighthouses or buoys, taken over by Canada, or considered unnecessary.

In 1939, when the Coast Guard assumed responsibility for aids to navigation, the number of stations had been reduced to 30, and although three additional stations were established during the 1954-1965 period, the total number of lightship stations continued to de-

# A History of U.S. Lightships

By Willard Flint

Reprinted from a U.S. Coast Guard  
Public Domain Website

(With thanks to Barbara Ford, Editor of the Long Island Maritime Museum newsletter *The Dolphin* where I first read it and who supplied the website printout)

cline steadily until 1983 when replacement of the Nantucket Shoals Lightship with a large navigational buoy marked the end of America's lightship era

**Lightships Satisfied Multiple ATON (Aids to Navigation) Requirements:** As seamarks, lightships satisfied multiple requirements. They could be moored in shallow water, even near shifting shoals where fixed structures could not be placed. They could just as easily be stationed in deep water many miles from shore, to serve as a landfall or a point of departure for trans-oceanic traffic. And being vessels, they could be readily repositioned to suit changing needs.

In these roles, lightships served as day beacons, as light platforms by night, as sound signal stations in times of reduced visibility, and around the clock as transmitters of bearings and distance-finding electronic signals. Outages or difficulties with any of their systems and equipment could be immediately detected and remedied on the spot by the crew. During their relatively brief era, U.S. lightships evolved into highly sophisticated and efficient aids to navigation.

Progress and development in the early years of lightships was woefully inadequate, due primarily to organizational and management deficiencies that were allowed to persist for many years. Initially, little consideration was given to suitable design and construction characteristics. Early light vessels were largely a product of opinion and arbitrary judgment on the part of builders who were often ignorant of the true purpose of the vessel or its harsh operating environment.

Initially, lightships were exceedingly poor light platforms; their full body, shoal draft and light displacement combining to cause undue rolling and violent pitching. Thirty-one years after the first American lightship dropped anchor in Chesapeake Bay, the skipper of a seagoing light was complaining that "her broad bluff bow is not at all calculated to resist the fury of the sea, which in some of the gales we experience in the winter season, break against us and over us with almost impending fury." Such rolling and pitching, in turn, resulted in frequent loss of moorings and breakage or damage to the lanterns.

The captain of another such vessel described its hull as being "similar to a barrel," so that "she is constantly in motion, and when it is in any ways rough, she rolls and labors to such a degree as to heave the glass out of the lanterns, the beds out of the berths, tearing out the chain-plates, etc. and rendering her unsafe and uncomfortable."

Certainly by present-day standards, crew accommodations on early lightships would have been judged uninhabitable. Even years later, in 1891, a visitor to the Nantucket Lightship reported on the boredom and discomfort he found there. The weather could toss

the vessel about so violently that even veteran sailors became seasick. On calm days, nausea gave way to tedium, for the crew could service the light and make things shipshape within a few hours, leaving the rest of the day for making rattan baskets to sell ashore or for simply whittling away the hours.

Seldom did anyone visit the ship's small library, and even shipboard food was monotonous, wholesome though it was. The most common dish was "scouse", which impressed the visitor as a "wonderful commingling of salt beef, potatoes and onions." And, in terms of tours of duty aboard early lightships, crew members spent eight months of the year at sea, two four-month stints separated by shore leave.

**Scientific Advances:** A visit to the Nantucket in the early 1970s would have produced a much different report. Scientific advances in hull design, the use of bilge keels, plus adoption of improved ballasting techniques produced more stable vessels. Not only did new hull designs reduce roll, but diesel engines also helped the captain keep his vessel headed into the wind for even greater stability. Unfortunately for some, however, the smell of diesel fuel was almost as distressing as the motion the engines helped prevent.

Over the years, creature comforts were upgraded too. Reading would become a popular pastime on lightships while radio, and later, television, helped to dispel boredom. Cooks produced a surprising variety of meals, and the murderous four-month tour was eventually reduced to approximately 30 days. One change, though, was for the worse, at least as far as crew comfort was concerned. The bleat of modern fog-horns was so loud that anyone venturing on deck without ear protectors risked pain and deafness. These changes in safety practices, living conditions, and in ship and equipment design were slow in coming, and to understand why this was so, one must first understand how America's lightships were managed.

Supervisory responsibility for lightships, as well as all other navigational aids, was assigned in 1820 to the Fifth Auditor of the Treasury Department, with control being exercised through what was known as the Lighthouse Establishment, a loosely structured organization administered at the local level by the Collectors of Customs. These people operated independently, acquiring material and equipment, contracting for construction and deciding on their own what requirements were to be satisfied. They also hired and fired personnel, paid the wages and carried out or arranged for the annual inspections of existing aids to navigation. The inspection reports, together with recommendations which were based largely on personal preference and opinion, were then forwarded to the Fifth Auditor.

Stephen Pleasonton, the Fifth Auditor, had no familiarity with the nature of his maritime involvement, and little interest in requirements for assisting mariners, distancing himself entirely from the events in progress. Control was exercised in singlehanded fashion by arbitrary findings based on review of the inspection reports, and by tight control of the purse strings. This resulted in a host of misguided decisions, shoddy and unsafe construction, and a system of navigational aids which was inadequate to the need, behind the times and technically inefficient.

**Eight Lighthouse Districts Estab-**



**lished:** In 1838, the situation was improved somewhat when Congress divided the Atlantic Coast into six lighthouse districts and the Great Lakes into two, each with a Navy officer assigned, and a revenue cutter or leased vessel made available for conducting inspections. Reports generated by this action gave evidence of large-scale mismanagement and pointed out in great detail, defects in equipment, low morale, incompetence among personnel, and irresponsible performance by contractors. Although Pleasonton was apparently displeased by these reports, he continued to sidestep any remedies and remained unduly concerned with the costs cited for improving the situation.

Due largely to the meager funds made available, lightship development continued to lag far behind progress being made in Europe. Although some standardization had been achieved, by 1842, the 30 lightships in U.S. service ranged from 40 to 230 tons burden, constructed entirely of wood, poorly rigged in many cases, and had no machinery-driven means of propulsion. Illuminating apparatus was limited to multiple-wick sperm oil lamps of poor visibility that had to be raised and lowered to the deck for servicing. Ground tackle was inadequate and hull design still failed to consider the weather and sea conditions encountered by these small vessels. Neither tenders nor relief vessels were available at the time, and, as a consequence when the vessels were frequently blown adrift, stations remained unmarked for periods measured in weeks and months.

Congress eventually became aware of the serious disarray and, using competent and qualified inspectors, carried out an investigation in 1851. A voluminous but meaningful report resulted. This report was extremely critical, pointing out that many of the lightships were extensively rotted and poorly maintained; their lighting equipment inadequate; and that entire crew complements were often absent for lengthy periods.

Also criticized was the practice of hiring farmers and other landsman as officers and crew members who, in some cases hired stand-ins to perform their duty. Much was made of the fact that the published range of visibility of all lights was erroneous; that there was no uniform system for coloring, numbering or otherwise identifying floating aids; that the positions of many lightships had been poorly selected; and that additional vessels were required. Recommendations were comprehensive, specific and, for the most part, worthwhile.

**Lighthouse Board Formed:** The outcome of this report led to formation of the Lighthouse Board in 1852 as a separate branch of the Treasury Department. This was a nine-member committee composed of officers of the Navy, Army Corps of Engineers and civilian scientists. The board, guided by conclusions and recommendations of the 1851 investigation, acted at once to take advantage of available technology, to upgrade equipment and to revise contracting procedures.

The organizational structure was drastically overhauled to provide seven districts on the Atlantic coast, two on the Gulf coast, two on the Great Lakes and one on the Pacific coast, each with a Navy officer as district inspector. Separate subcommittees were established to address all requirements for ATON. These included finance and contract manage-

ment, design and engineering, and lighting, as well as one that tested and evaluated new equipment, determined requirements and developed standard maintenance procedures.

By 1855, this had led to construction of several lightships of new, and more or less standard, design, and installation of new and more efficient illuminating apparatus on most existing vessels. The merits of various types of sound signals, illuminants and methods of marking or otherwise distinguishing one lightship from another were also investigated.

Until this time, lightships were identified only by the name of the station which they occupied, and no specification or requirement existed for color or marking. Although station names were painted on the sides of lightships at about this time, no numbers were used to identify individual vessels until 1867.

As progress in the technical area continued, so did efforts to upgrade the caliber and competence of lightship crews. However, with the 1852 ration allowance for lightship crew-members being set at 20 cents per day, wages, benefits, accommodations and food remained rather spartan.

At the district level, an engineer was assigned to assist the inspector and, as time progressed, each district established a depot for supply and maintenance of its own equipment. Modern equipment continued to be introduced, and supervision and general effectiveness was improved.

There is little question that the Lighthouse Board caused noteworthy progress, however, the committee organization did not lend itself to prompt action on day-to-day operating matters, and translating plans and recommendations into accomplishment continued to be a cumbersome and diffuse process.

Congress again stepped in, considering that the board structure was unwieldy, and hindered by undue military influence and bickering. Feeling the need for an improved command structure and an organization capable of functioning as an entity responsive to a single civilian authority, the Lighthouse Board was disbanded in 1910. In its place was established a Bureau of Lighthouses within the Department of Commerce, having as its operating agency the U.S. Lighthouse Service. Heading up the bureau, a commissioner of lighthouses reported directly to the secretary of commerce, and also directly controlled the day-to-day operations of the service. For the first time, lightships, as well as all other aspects of navigational aids had found a place in a service-oriented organization with an adequate command structure.

**George Putnam Named Commissioner Of Lighthouses:** Under the able and progressive leadership of Commissioner George Putnam, the Bureau of Lighthouses moved rapidly to the forefront of the world's agencies engaged in developing and maintaining ATON. Although technological advances were highlighted during Putnam's tenure, his most valuable contribution was probably in the area of organization and personnel administration. Here he emphasized competence and demanded professional performance by all employees, and he was responsible for remedying the long-standing problems with pay, living conditions, benefits and a safe and efficient work environment.

This organization prospered for nearly 30 years, developing and perfecting the use of the radio beacon, modernizing illuminants and

optical equipment, improving signalling methods, advancing the use of automated aids, and demonstrating the feasibility of unattended and radio-controlled light vessels and lighthouses. The lightship itself, through innovative engineering and naval architecture, was developed into an effective vessel specifically built to handle its environmental requirements, and with propulsion and auxiliary systems adequate to its needs. Watertight integrity and a variety of other safety features were also highly developed in lightships of the late 1930s.

**Lighthouse Service Merges With The Coast Guard:** In 1939, the mission of the Coast Guard was expanded to include responsibility for ATON, and resources of the former Lighthouse Service were transferred at that time. Lightship officers and crews, as well as other civilian employees, were offered two choices; integration into the Coast Guard with military rank commensurate with existing salary; or retention in civilian status under Coast Guard command. Exercise of these options resulted in about a 50-50 split.

For lightships, many operated initially with either an all-military or an all-civilian complement. This later gave way to a mix of military and civilian personnel. The mixed crews were in evidence well after World War II and a few of the Lighthouse Service civilian employees were still active into the 1970s. In 1967, the Coast Guard became part of the Department of Transportation.

From 1939 until the end of the lightship era in 1983, the high standards of professionalism and technology introduced by the Lighthouse Service were carried forward and improved upon by the Coast Guard, well in keeping with its long history of dedication to the interest of mariners.

**Lightships Contend With Nature's Fury:** Life aboard the lightships, aside from being viewed as monotonous by many, was exposed to many hazards. Survivors from Five Fathom Lightship #87, which took four men to the bottom with it, told of how their ship foundered off Five Fathom Bank, New Jersey after an army of mountainous waves marched across its bulwarks, tore off its ventilators and hatch covers and filled it with water through the resulting deck openings.

There were no survivors, however, when Buffalo Lightship #82, located near Buffalo, New York, foundered in a gale that swept across Lake Erie in November, 1913, but a message from its dead captain to his wife told it all. Scrawled on a board that washed ashore a few days after the disaster, the message read: "Goodbye, Nellie, ship is breaking up fast. Williams." Six months passed before the submerged wreck was located, more than two miles from its assigned station.

A diver who penetrated the 63' of water that enshrouded Buffalo #82 reported that the storm had apparently parted its cables, battered in its superstructure, then dragged it to destruction. The body of one of the six men lost with it was found a year later, 13 miles from the site of the sinking.

Cross Rip Lightship #6 left no survivors or messages when it vanished off Massachusetts with all hands February 5, 1918. Observers on shore reported seeing the helpless lightship torn loose from its moorings by a huge mass of windblown ice and carried away. The aged wooden vessel had no masts, sails or other means of motive power and, not be-



ing equipped with a radio, its fate and that of its six-man crew remained a mystery for 15 years. No trace of the ship was found until 1933, when a government dredge working in the Vineyard Sound area sucked up splintered pieces of oak planking and ribs, and a section of a windlass believed to be from the long-lost vessel. The most likely explanation for its loss is that the ice crushed its hull, and the crewmen perished in the winter sea.

Another mystery surrounds the loss of Vineyard Sound Lightship #73, which foundered during a 1944 hurricane with the loss of all hands. Its storm-battered wreck was explored by divers a few weeks after it sank, and again 20 years later, yet the actual cause of its loss remains unknown. Residents of Westport, Massachusetts, reported seeing a series of red and white flares streaking across the cloud-filled skies in the general direction of the lightship. After the storm abated somewhat, they struggled down to the beach and scanned the murky horizon, only to discover that Vineyard Sound #73, which had been guarding Sow and Pigs Reef, had vanished from its station. This account of the incident and the rather intriguing aftermath is dedicated to its crew who remained at their posts until the end.

In December 1936, a 100-mph gale assailed the Swiftsure Lightship #113, anchored in the Strait of Juan de Fuca off the Washington coast. "The wind came shrieking and snarling out of the south," its skipper recalled, "blowing a hurricane." The sea, he declared "writhed and steamed like a bowl of boiling milk," and the sky was "full of innumerable tiny particles of water torn from the crests of the waves until the air was so thick we could barely see half the length of our vessel." Captain Eric Lindman flinched as waves broke over the pilothouse and the seas forced its way "through every fissure, no matter how small, even squirting in through the keyholes in the outer cabin doors." Unlike its ill-fated sisters, however, Swiftsure survived the intense 12-hour battering.

Storms were certainly not a lightship's only threat. Man, rather than nature, caused the loss of the Diamond Shoals Lightship #71 in 1918 off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. A German submarine, provoked by the lightship's radio message warning off shipping, surfaced and, after allowing the 12-man crew to abandon ship, sank it with shellfire. The lightship's sacrifice was not in vain though, for more than 25 Allied ships had received its timely radio warning.

Sixteen years later, on May 15, 1934, the Nantucket Lightship #117 was riding at anchor in 192' of water off Nantucket Shoals.

Its horn boomed into the fog to warn away the trans-Atlantic shipping that passed nearby. Unseen by sailors aboard the Nantucket was the 47,000-ton British luxury liner *Olympic*. Steering to the lightship's radio beacon signal, the ocean liner intended to alter course at the last moment and pass close by the Nantucket.

On the bridge of the *Olympic*, someone miscalculated though. The liner, sister ship to the *Titanic*, suddenly materialized out of the fog; its towering bow hung poised like the blade of a guillotine, then severed the lightship in two. Seven of the Nantucket's 11-man crew died in the collision. In response to the tragedy, the British government replaced the Nantucket with a new lightship, one resembling a miniature battleship. Its hull was fashioned from armor plate, enclosing a maze of 43 watertight compartments. Atop its mast was a light visible from almost 50 miles. And, whenever the foghorn would sound, a radio transmitter would automatically broadcast a signal, enabling navigators of oncoming ships to calculate the distance to the lightship.

Certainly, dangers posed by weather and collision were ever-present. Official records contain 237 instances of lightships being blown adrift or dragged off-station in severe weather or moving ice. Five lightships were lost under such conditions, but the majority, despite heavy damage to hull and superstructure on many of these occasions, remained on station unassisted. This attests to a high order of seamanship, and commendations for bravery and outstanding ship handling often resulted.

**Minor Bumps, Sideswipes And Near-Misses:** Without regard to frequent minor bumps, sideswipes and near-misses, 150 more serious collisions with lightships are documented. Most of these involved sailing vessels, but long tows of multiple barges accounted for a sizeable number. Collision damage ranged from superficial to severe, and, in at least one case, the lightship came out unscathed, with the colliding vessel going down nearby. On another occasion when a lightship was struck by a passing vessel, the impact was sufficient to knock the on-watch lightship crew from their feet, and shatter all 16-lamp chimneys in the masthead lanterns.

Besides the Nantucket in 1934, four other lightships were sunk as the result of being rammed. Fog was a factor in many of these collisions, however most occurred under conditions of reasonably good visibil-

ity. Vessels attempting to cross the bow of the lightship without making due allowance for current and leeway were found to be the usual cause.

Although compensated for to some extent in later years, a variety of factors contributed to lightships being veritable targets for all traffic. Many were positioned in mid-channel. Early charts were overprinted with dotted lines running from lightship to lightship giving the course and distance, and sailing directions in early Coast Pilots openly encouraged passing lightships close aboard. Ships' officers handling coasters during the 1800s were by and large sadly deficient in the practice of piloting and navigation. Charts were often either not carried at all, or were not used for plotting. Instead, reliance was placed on listings of courses, bearings and distances found in a variety of government and commercial publications, or simply passed on by word of mouth. Little wonder that lightshipping carried with it such a large measure of apprehension.

**America's Lightship Era Ends:** March 29, 1985, saw the final chapter of America's lightship era come to a close with the decommissioning of the Nantucket 1. In a farewell message, Coast Guard Commandant ADM James S. Gracey said, "Technology has found a way to replace her with a more cost-effective aid to navigation, but Nantucket 1's sailors can never be replaced."

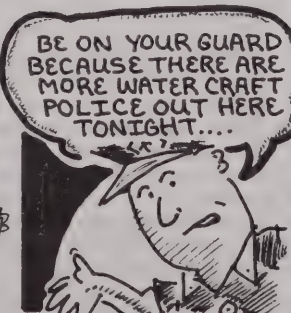
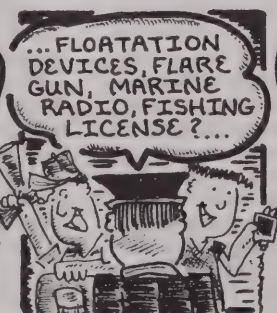
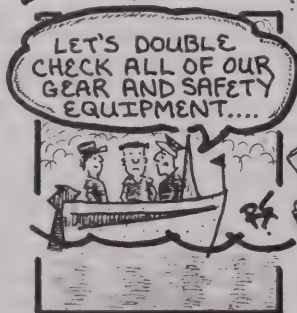
In many cases lightships were replaced with "Texas Tower" type offshore light platforms, other fixed structures or large navigational buoys, all offering considerable savings in manpower and in construction and maintenance costs.

The last message sent by the ship read in part, "An important part of Coast Guard history ended today. We must now look somewhere else to find the stuff that sea stories are made of."

Most of the decommissioned lightships are long gone. Quite a few were sold and served in coastwise and harbor roles. Two provided bonfires at Fourth of July celebrations and several were used as target ships by the Navy. A few were transferred to other countries for use as lightships, some were used as floating clubhouses by various organizations, but the majority ended up in a ship breakers' yard. However, 19 lightships still survive, the three oldest built in 1904. Most of these veterans remain afloat, restored for use as museums or exhibits open to the public. Two serve as floating restaurants and one is in use in the charter trade.

This cannot end with the traditional look to the future of lightships, for there is none. However, the vessels themselves, and certainly all those who served in them, constitute a unique and proud segment of America's maritime heritage, one sometimes overlooked, but never to be forgotten.

## SHIVER ME TIMBERS



by: Bob Summers



## Additional Reading

Bennett, William E.: *White for Danger: True Dramas of Lightships and Light-houses*. New York. The John Day Company, 1963.

Ehrman, CDR William E., USCG (Ret.): *Lost on Voyages to Nowhere*. Washington, D.C. Commandant's Bulletin, July-August 1984.

Flint, Willard: *Lightships and Lightship Stations of the U. S Government*. Washington, D.C. Coast Guard Historian's Office, 1989.

Floherly, John J.: *Men Without Fear*. New York. J.B. Lippincott Company, 1940.

Natty, Bernard C. and Strobridge, Truman R.: *Bright and Steadfast Light*. New London, CT. U.S Coast Guard Academy Alumni Bulletin, Nov/Dec 1975.

## U.S. Lightships Preserved As Museums

(Last known locations)

Lightship #79: A survivor of the second generation of steam-propelled lightships, LV-79 is being restored by the Philadelphia Ship Preservation Guild, Delaware Ave. & Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19106. Built in 1904 at Camden, NJ, the LV-79 displays the name *Barneget*, is afloat and open to the public. Its last official designation was WAL-506.

Lightship #83: Built as part of a five-vessel contract, LV-83 served three mayor ports (Eureka and San Francisco, CA and Seattle, WA) between 1905-1960. The ship is owned by Northwest Seaport, Inc., 1002 Valley St., Seattle, WA 98111. The LV-83 displays the name *Relief*, is afloat and open to the public. The ship's last official designation was WAL-508.

Lightship #87: While serving the port of New York (1908-1932), the LV-87 was the site of the first successful shipboard radio beacon used to guide ships at long distances in poor weather. The LV-87 is owned by the South Street Seaport Museum, 207 Front St., New York, NY 10038. The vessel displays the name *Ambrose*, is afloat and open to the public. Its last official designation was WAL-512.

Lightship #101: The LV-OJ served at least five stations in the middle-Atlantic states between 1916-1954. The vessel is owned by the Portsmouth Lightship Museum, P.O. Box 248, Portsmouth, VA 23705. The ship is located on land and open to the public. It displays the name *Portsmouth*, although there was never a station by that name. Its last official designation was WAL-524.

Lightship #103: The LV-103 is the only surviving lightship type specifically built for service on the Great Lakes. It is owned by the City of Huron, 905 7th St., Port Huron, MI 48060. The LV-103 is exhibited on land at Pine Grove Park and open to the public. The LV-103 displays the name *Huron*. Its last official designation was WAL-526.

Lightships #112 and #84: The LV-112 is the only U.S. lightship still operating on

the open seas, occasionally cruising the New England coast. It, and LV 84, are owned by the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum, W. 46th St., & 12th Ave., New York, NY 10035. Both vessels are afloat and open to the public. LV-112 displays the name *Nantucket* and its last official designation was WAL-534. LV-84 displays the name *Relief* and its last official designation was WAL-509.

Lightship #116: In addition to serving the Fenwick, Chesapeake, and Delaware stations, the LV-116 served as an examination vessel off Cape Cod, MA, protecting the port of Boston during World War II. It is owned by the National Park Service and on loan to the City of Baltimore. The ship is part of the Baltimore Maritime Museum, Pier 4, Pratt St., Baltimore, MD 21202. The LV-116 displays the name *Chesapeake*, is afloat and open to the public. Its last official designation was WAL-538.

Lightship #118: Although never actually assigned to Overfalls station off the Delaware coast, that is the name this vessel displays. The LV-118 actually served several other stations between 1938-1972. The LV-118 is owned by the Lewes Historical Society, West 3rd St., Lewes DE 19958. Lightship #118 is afloat and open to the public. Its last official designation was WAL-539.

Lightship WAL-604: One of two of the last class of lightships built by the Coast Guard, the WAL-604 spent its entire 28 years of duty off Columbia River, OR, station. Retired in 1979, it was the last lightship serving on the Pacific Coast. The ship is owned by the Columbia River Maritime Museum, 1792 Mahne Dr., Astoria, OR 97103. The WAL-604 displays the name *Columbia*, is afloat, open to the public and capable of operating under its own power.

Lightship WAL-605: Originally stationed at Overfalls on the East Coast, this vessel was subsequently sent to the Pacific to serve at the Blunt's Reef station off Cape Mendocino, CA. It is currently being restored as an operating museum vessel. The WAL-605 is owned by the U.S. Lighthouse Society, 244 Kearny St., 5th floor, San Francisco, CA 94108. The WAL-605 displays the name *Relief*, is afloat, open to the public and capable of operating under its own power.

For more information on the current locations of these vessels, contact Kevin Foster of the National Park Service's National Maritime Initiative at National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. The website concerned with lightships is: [http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h\\_lightships.html](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_lightships.html)

## Coast Guard History

For more information on resources available from the U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, contact them at Historian's Office (G-1PA-4), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second St. SW, Washington, DC 20593-0001. Their website is <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/AboutOffice.html>

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The old boat is a little short of sixteen feet long and about fifty six inches wide. My son and I took the lines off of it so we could build a copy. As you can see, there are only three strakes to the side and I tell you, when we spiled it off, that bottom one was funny looking to somebody used to a round bottom. It was wide at both ends and narrow in the middle and with a sweep to it like a banana. Gibbs must have had some wide mahogany to get those out of. Luckily, so did we, but our mahogany was tulip poplar. Wayne added those heavy duty rails on there (see that sacrificial outer piece) and there is a heavy duty extra bottom half-soleo onto the original Gibbs long-planked mahogany bottom too. I mentioned that there might be a barnacle or two on there. That's because the boat is too heavy for one man to turn over and scrape them off. Hell, I think it is too heavy for two people, but it is a fine sea boat.

I have a longtime friend (the best kind) who uses a boat more than anybody else I know. He lives, full time, on a little island about four miles from the mainland in Apalachee Bay in the Gulf of Mexico and there is no bridge out there so the only way to get back and forth is a boat or an airplane. My friend always does it with one of his own boats and he has had, and does have, a bunch of them including an old 26' surplus Navy Motor Whaleboat and he uses it every now and then, but mostly when you see him or some of his family crossing the bay, they are in his little old dory.

I understand that. A big boat is a nice thing and it is easy to convince yourself in a situation like his (and mine) that it is worth all the trouble but the fact is that a little boat anchored right up there on the beach in the shallows is the most satisfactory. We both live on the bayside of the island where the flats are very shallow and usually dry out at least once a day. A big boat just has to lie off too far to be worth fooling with most of the time so it swings on its mooring down in the harbor and the little dory is what goes back and forth to the mainland.

I have to dispel a myth right here. Big planing boats are not better in rough water than little boats. They may be more comfortable at times but they are susceptible to all sorts of problems in very rough conditions... problems like not being able to go in the intended direction. It is sort of like that other old myth, that high sides make for a seaworthy boat. That's why, when it gets real rough, big planing boats with a lot out of the water and not much in, can't go in the intended direction. A good little boat is just as seaworthy as anything except for maybe a beer bottle with a cork in it.

## Wayne's Old Dory

By Robb White

Wayne's little dory can go and come with any deep "V" in the bay. Of course, it can't run fifty knots into a three foot chop with thirty thousand dollars worth of a matched pair of sacrificial outboards on the stern and a price-less matched pair of Rottweilers perched up in the bow tub, so he'll be easing along behind... but he'll get home with the groceries in time for supper. And, he might beat the other boat if you take the whole trip into consideration because he can ease right up to the path to the house whereas those other folks have to go through all sorts of rigamarole down at the harbor with dock lines, automobiles, jumper cables and...

I have to stop right here in the middle of the sentence and tell you this: The place where Wayne (and us) land to go to the grocery store is right beside the dry storage yard where most of the other islanders keep their big boats. It is not polite to leave a boat unattended at a public dock so one of us has to stay to move it if need be. For entertainment, while we wait, we watch the doings with the big fork lift. There is a common little play that runs (sort of like *My Fair Lady*) forever at that place. The fork lift will put the *Get Ya Some* in the water and the little woman will hop in while the old man goes to settle the tab. She will twist the key with the little plastic buoy on the chain and nothing will happen.

"Honey, the boat's not working," she'll wail. The old man and the fork lift man will

come have a look. "How long since you charged this battery?" the operator will say.

"Well," the man will start, "let me see."

"It ain't no good no mo," the operator will interrupt. "Them damn Diehards ain't no good nohow. You need you one of these Interstates, best battery made."

"You sold us one of those last summer, and it didn't even make it 'til Labor Day," the woman laments.

"That wasn't the battery, that was y'all's rectifiers. What you want to do?" ...worst of all, when they finally get to the island, they have to deal with the social aspects of the harbor including public humiliation when their dogs refuse to pay a bit of attention to them. While all that drama is playing out, Wayne will be sitting on his porch admiring his good old boat out there swinging to its anchor in the dappled, late afternoon light reflected up off the white sand bottom in the clear water of the shallows.

It is an admirable boat. It has the look of a boat that gets a lot of use, kind of raggedy and skint up... might even have a barnacle or two on the bottom, about like something that has to work... but ain't nothing wrong with that. Wayne has had it for a long time and no telling how many outboard motors that old dory has worn out (and one inboard rig too... I'll get to that after a while). Right now, he is running a Yamaha fifteen that he came across at a bargain, but most of the engines have been one cylinder Japanese threes, or twos depending on who you believe. In his situation, it is good to be able to take the engine off and put it in the trunk of the car when he has to leave the dory on the river bank to go away for a while... or when it gets real stormy at the island and the boat might get rained full of water. I like a little outboard motor myself (my favorite is a Honda two).

Longest lasting of the engines on the dory was a Suzuki 2hp. It had a long, horizontally rectangular, round cornered looking head on it and one time Wayne was loading up the groceries, tools and hardware, gas jugs and all the junk that is always needed in a place like this while an old fisherman in white rubber boots (that's how you tell old fishermen down here) was standing around the dock observing the doings at the waterfront (another way to tell old fishermen). "Wayne," he said, "you know it is amazing to me how you go back and forth in that little old skiff boat all the time. It ain't the boat, hell, I know that's a sea-boat, it's that engine. Why, it's no bigger than a loaf of bread!" Wayne poured a pint of gas in its little tank and pulled the rope and off he went.

Looking at that boat in the picture, you would swear that it was a refugee from Mystic Seaport (as a matter of fact, what stirred me to write this was that most exquisitely stirring story about the Chamberlain Dory Skiff by Sharon Brown (last October in this magazine) or some other place up there near the Mecca of boats like that but it ain't. It was built in Jacksonville, Florida by the Gibbs Gasoline Engine Company some time before 1950. Gibbs built a bunch of those boats (25 a week all through the thirties). They came with a little one cylinder, air cooled, four cycle engine also manufactured by Gibbs.

George Gibbs was an aggressive marketer and sold those dories like hotcakes even through the depression. He claimed that they would go 8mph and they might have done it. Unlike the Chamberlain dory, the run and the

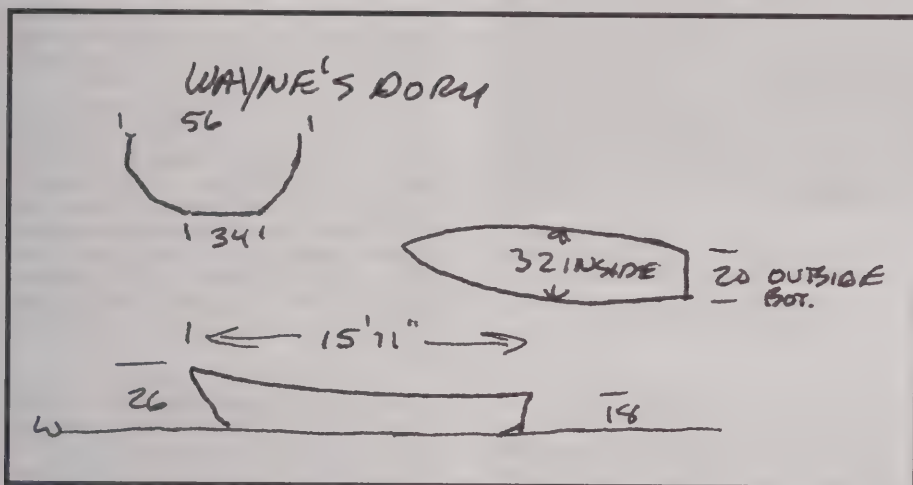


transom is more like a semi planing boat than a pure displacement boat. Wayne's will plane just fine with that fifteen he has on there now but it would also scoot right along with one of those twos.

I am beginning to learn that there are good compromise sailboats like that too... when you have the wind, they'll go and when you ain't, they'll still go. All you have to do is slide to the stern to plane and ooch forward to lift the transom a little bit when the wind slacks off. As you might suspect, those oars (check those hose-style leathers) are not just for decoration. Wayne, like me, does not believe in

trusting his dignity (not to mention his life) to any kind of machinery. The old boat, though heavy as hell, rows very well.

Gibbs built those things out of very good Central American mahogany and must have put them together right. Though mahogany boats don't normally hold up too well down here, if the laps are well luted and the frames bedded, such a thing will easily outlast any kind of plywood boat in rough service. Wayne has had to do a lot of work on the old dory through the years (including an extremely heavy duty epoxy-fiberglass job) but there she is... ready.

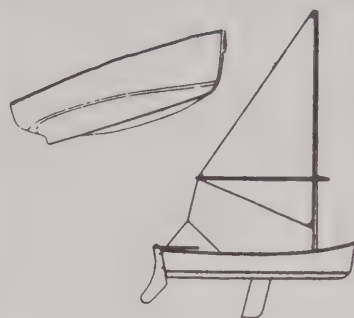


Here is a copy of the lines my son and I took off to build the copy of the old boat. It is perfectly alright for you to use them to build you one just like it.

So what happened to the copy? We did it for another friend. Just planked it up and framed it out for him to finish himself. It is up there in Virginia undergoing completion. That's the only picture I have of it. That's the owner looking like a hornet guarding the hole.



## KITTERY POINT TENDER



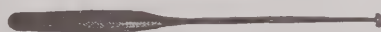
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The original *Djinni* was an elderly wood Lightning. I named it after my wife Genie so she would let me buy it, but we used the more exotic Arabian Nights spelling. *Djinni III*, the current nameholder, is a Menemsha 24. In between was this odd but satisfactory little daysailer.

When I acquired this 13-footer, about twenty years ago, she was far from my ideal sailboat. In fact, she wasn't a sailboat at all, but an inboard motor launch. I undertook a conversion for three reasons. First was economic. It was far cheaper than building just the right boat. Second, I had already acquired a complete sailing rig, mast, boom, and sails, some years earlier. It appealed to my Yankee sense of parsimony to find a new use for these. Finally, I was lucky enough to find a quality hull that would be suitable for this kind of design change.

The boat had been designed as a motor launch in about 1967 by Fred Bates of Damariscotta, Maine, and built by Libby and Cook in Camden. Mr. Bates used the boat for a while, then sold it to Captain Eben Whitcomb of the schooner *Harvey Gamage* for use as a tender. Captain Whitcomb told me that he found the deep-keeled tender inconvenient for carrying passengers to the beach, so he replaced her with an outboard motorboat. She then apparently fell on some hard times.

When I first saw the boat, she was propped up on a muddy creek bank near Captain Whitcomb's home in Clinton, Connecticut. The engine was gone, one coaming was broken and another missing, and the rubrails and floorboards had been removed. But the Down East pedigree was obvious, a no-frills workmanlike design with springy sheerline and conservative overhangs, and solid construction that echoes the tradition of larger boats built to go to sea for a living.

My immediate impression, confirmed by closer examination, was that it might be possible to convert this boat to a reasonably competent sailboat without doing too much violence to the original elegant design. Unlike most power boats, the waterline is essentially double-ended. The deep keel and cutaway forefoot seemed to lend themselves to enlargement to increase the lateral plane. Though the

By Tom Dawkins

## How *Djinni II* Came to Be

hull lines seemed a little full, especially up forward, to be particularly fast, the possibility existed for a good tradeoff with comfort and stability.

I had decided that the boat needed me, so I bought it. Captain Whitcomb generously provided me with a carful of stuff from the boat, including the missing floorboards and rubrails as well as a miscellaneous supply of mechanical equipment and hardware. He also told me the boat's history. What other 13-footer has such a past, covering the coast from Maine to the Grenadines in a schooner's davits? Who wanted to resist this temptation? I guess I've always been afflicted with the tendency to see potential in things.

As soon as the boat was mine and in the water, I lashed my old 17' mast in place and took her sailing to see what would happen. I should have known. That little rudder, perfectly adequate for a power boat, had no effect at all in the absence of prop-wash. We sailed fine down the wind, and even across the wind, but when it was time to turn around and head for home I wasn't in charge any more. I had to be towed back to the beach. I stranded the boat on the next tide and hastily enlarged the rudder by bolting two pieces of plywood over the existing brass rudder. That temporary arrangement served for several years.

Further sailing trials enabled me to obtain some baseline data to properly locate the mast and design the keel modification. With the original keel profile I found poor windward ability and pronounced lee helm with the wind on the beam. Subsequent calculations showed that the geometric center of the sail area was almost 20% of the waterline length ahead of the center of lateral plane of the hull as originally designed. Knowing this enabled me to move the mast aft and extend the keel so that in the completed conversion the sail area leads the CLP by about 14.5% of DWL. This location is within the recommended range

for boats of this type, and has proved itself in use.

Sailing trials also pointed out interior changes needed for sailing. For example, by simply lowering the slatted seats three inches and installing new coamings three inches higher than the originals, I was able to provide comfortable inboard facing seating with good back support.

The interior layout and hull volume impart the feeling of a much larger boat (the brighter side of a high prismatic coefficient). The seating offers several optional locations for helmsman and passengers, making long daysails more interesting. The skipper can sit on the seat, back aft near the tiller, or on the cockpit sole, on the windward side, between the center deck and the forward end of the seat. Passengers can sit at either location aft of the mast, but most seem to prefer the forward cockpit.

The design stage of the conversion turned into a process of applying some of the principles of yacht design, such as helm balance and displacement calculation, and gingerly disregarding those I couldn't do anything about anyway. What's to be done about a high displacement/length ratio (she weighs almost a thousand pounds soaking wet), a high prismatic coefficient (.59), and a low sail area (93 sq. ft.) to wetted surface area (47 sq. ft.) ratio (1.96)?

There were only two changes to the original design that I would call major; the keel extension and the construction of the center deck. The keel extension consists of five 3" x 5/8" oak planks laminated to the original leading edge, with an 85lb lead ballast casting attached to improve stability. The planks are epoxy glued, and the laminate and ballast are through-bolted to the inner keel by five 3/8" stainless threaded rods. The new leading edge of the keel is rounded. To protect the end grains of the laminate, a 5/8" thick oak shoe is let into the bottom of the keel aft of the ballast.

Structurally the center deck is there to provide lateral support for the mast. The mast goes through the deck and rests on a heavy oak step lag-bolted to the engine bed timbers. The main structural component of the deck assembly is an oak 2" x 4" set athwartships and through bolted to a hull frame at each end, just under the sheer clamp. Mast stresses, such as they are, are carried to this member through the plywood decking and a framework of 3/4" white pine.

Some minor changes were necessary, some merely afterthoughts. For example, a rudderpost adapter had to be invented to provide a means to install my old varnished tiller above the level of the seats. A length of pipe, flattened slightly at one end, the other end slipped over and bolted to the original rudderpost, served nicely for that. The gas tank was removed from the forepeak, and a hatch installed to ventilate the space and provide stowage for ground tackle.

So how does all this work when you put it in the water and raise the sails? From the beginning, this project was the coming together of scrounged materials, enlightened guesswork, and applied wishful thinking. The results were extremely satisfying.

Speed is not her strong point. That's dictated by physics. I simply decided that I could swap speed for the other qualities the boat could offer. Neither is she at her best in light air. At wind speeds below about 5mph she



tends to become unresponsive, especially if in the grip of a current. Windward ability is one of her strong points. While she's probably not as weatherly as a more refined fin-keel or centerboard boat, she has always met reasonable expectations for going from one place to another upwind. I believe that an important factor in her windward performance is momentum, the silver lining behind her high weight-to-length ratio. She carries her way to windward through chop conditions that would push a lighter boat off to leeward.

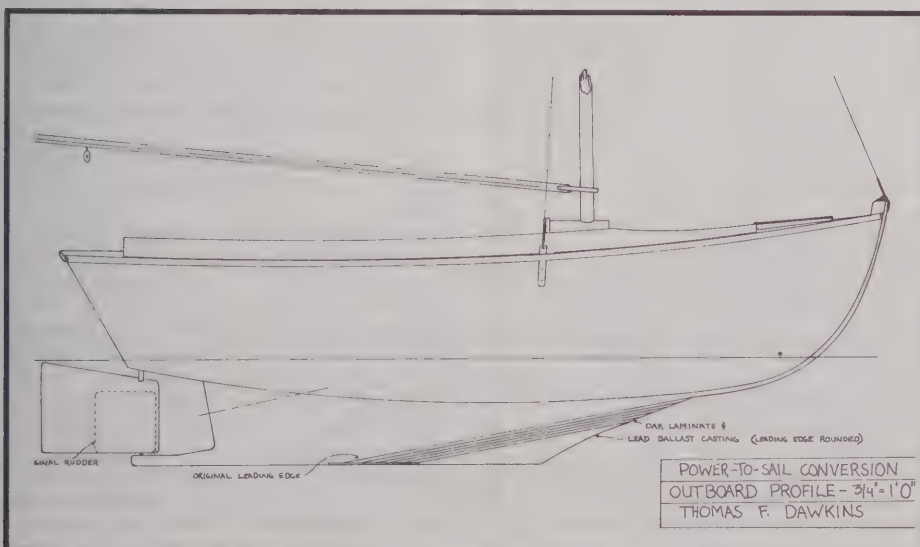
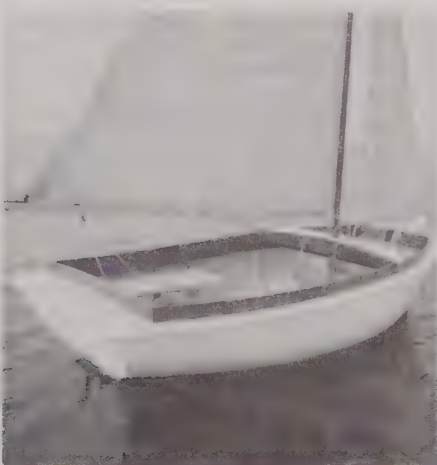
Momentum also makes her easier to move by muscle power when the wind dies. I recall a daysail with my father, "paddle-sailing" home through a calm. I commented that I thought the breeze was returning because I could feel the boat starting to move. "Nah," my father replied, "that's just momentum left over from this morning."

Helm balance is the most pleasing big-boat feature of this unlikely little sloop. A few degrees of weather helm when on the wind keeps her on course and behaving herself. On most points of sail, where the wind is abeam or forward, I can cleat down the main and jib sheets, tie the helm off to weather, and she'll sail herself. This frees me up for important activities such as clearing lines, stowing gear, or eating lunch. When the breeze is steady, I


can even settle down in the forward cockpit and watch my little ship go about her business unattended.

In the years since the conversion I've made a few more improvements to *Djinni II*. The hand-me-down tiller has been replaced with a stout length of ash with a real store-bought bronze rudder head fitting. Instead of the old, tired cotton sails she now sports a new dacron suit designed for the 15' West Wight Potter. These sails were just about a perfect fit. The balance of centers was not affected, and the more efficient main has improved windward performance.

I don't want to encourage anyone to undertake radical conversions such as this. Most power boats are designed as such and would make terrible sailboats. My motive is simply to share the story of an interesting and rewarding experience. My story started with a uniquely designed hull that was exceptionally suited to conversion, mainly because of the double-ended waterline. Added to that was my willingness to accept the limitations in sailing performance imposed on the boat by those factors which made it a good power boat. Obviously, I believe that my project was successful. *Djinni II* met my need for a "real boat" at reasonable cost, while being comfortable, seakindly, responsive, and absolutely unique.



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# More Push For Your Prop

Text & Diagrams by Herb Schneider

I'm going to paint eyes on all sides of the blades of my propeller. Eyes like those on the prow of a Chinese junk. Maybe that will help my prop see where it's going and not clobber itself to death on every deadhead, sunken Mack truck or chunk of old concrete.

The damage incurred seems worse when your engine is somewhat revved up while pulling away, backing down or going upstream when it's fast and shallow. There is little way on the boat; the prop is turning relatively fast compared to its movement through the water, so when an immovable object is encountered the blade bends rather than move the boat ahead.

It's the sort of thing that leaves you cussing to yourself. You are backing down fine until suddenly the motor shakes its head in protest and grunts a few times over the strange diet it's being fed. Too late now to do anything but look at it and go on. Although it may not look bad, on this last leg of your trip you notice your speed has fallen off, the motor will cavitate without being asked and the compass card is doing a nervous jiggle all the way back.

A propeller, you must agree, while looking over its subtle, compound curves, is a pretty clever gadget for transforming rotary motion into thrust. Its action results in squirting a column of water backwards like a fire hose stream or like the squid as it jets water out of its nozzle to move itself along. This is true of any similar type of locomotion through a non-solid, whether you use rockets, pumps or paddle wheels. The energy used to get this column of water jetting backwards results in a thrust in the opposite direction. So your boat moves.

If your prop were revolving in something like soft clay, it would screw itself along, moving a distance of one pitch for every revolution of the propeller. You may find figures stamped on the hub which describe this. The first is the diameter of the wheel, the second is the pitch. So, theoretically, the prop and boat movement through the water each minute would be the pitch times rpm of the prop.

It doesn't work out quite this way though, because a thing called slip enters in. The prop slips like a fat man climbing a sand hill. This difference or slip is shown as a percentage, running from a low of 15% on a big ship to 20%-30% on the average outboard. However, a slip of 25% is not equal to a 25% loss of energy. All of the water which is being thrust straight back results in a reaction or thrust forward.

It has to slip some to satisfy some other conditions. For instance, if the blade area were increased enough to reduce slip to a few per cent with no change in the pitch, the motor turning it could not handle the huge column of water generated by the prop when getting underway. The engine would never come up to speed or develop its rated horsepower. It would be like a car trying to pull away in third gear from a stop. If it could be assisted over the hump to get the boat up on plane, the over-size diameter and blade area would lose power for you through water friction and the resistance of a necessarily thicker blade.

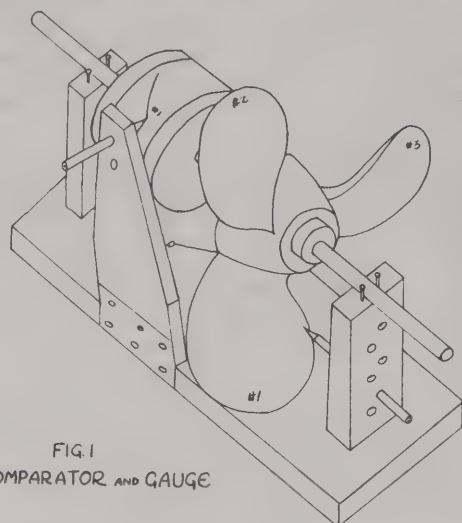


FIG. 1  
COMPARATOR AND GAUGE

As shaft is pulled to right, the shape of blade #1 is traced by pencil in contact with drum at upper left.

Two additional views of the comparator, showing the important details of construction.

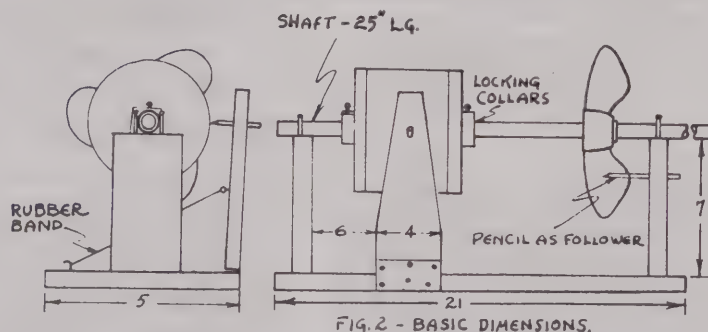
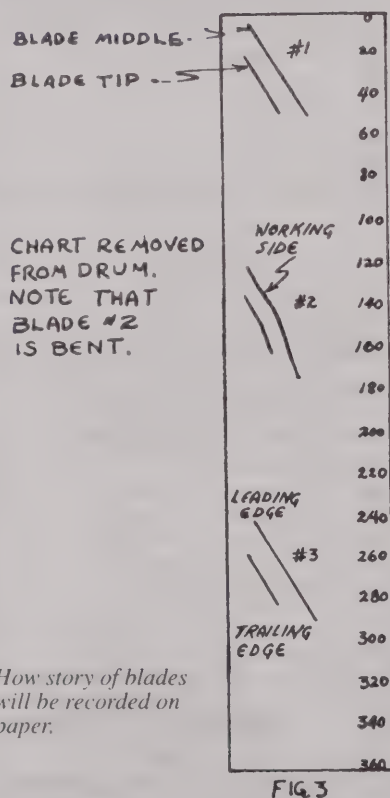


FIG. 2 - BASIC DIMENSIONS.



How story of blades will be recorded on paper.

FIG. 3

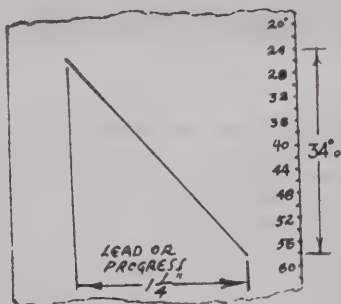


FIG. 4.  
TRACING AS USED TO  
DETERMINE THE PITCH.  
FROM ABOVE EXAMPLE:

$$\frac{\text{LEAD of } 1/4" \times 360^\circ}{34^\circ \text{ ROTATION}} = \text{PITCH; } 15.2"$$

One of many reasons the comparator is of value.



On the other hand, a blade area too small with its resultant high slip would be apt to suck down a column of air and cavitate so badly it would never get the boat going. It just couldn't feed itself enough water when first getting underway and soon the prop would be racing away in a ball of foam. Even if the boat were nursed along and finally achieved planing, the excessive turbulence created in the water column and the centrifugal effect of the blades throwing water out sideways like a pin wheel would waste power. Therefore, the designers must compromise on slippage to get thrust for various conditions of operation.

Take a look at the damage from our last trip. Besides a mushroomed over blade edge and a small area chipped out, it looks pretty good. A file and emery cloth will smooth it up to regain good surfaces. However, on a trial run vibration is still present. There's obviously something else wrong with it.

A quick check can be made if you have a pitch block designed for your prop. A pitch block is a form, molded to suit the contours of a specific prop. Place the working side on the block and examine how well the blade contacts the block, looking for high points on the blade which hold it away from the block. Reforming the blade is done with a rawhide mallet, using the block as an anvil. A pitch block is a handy gadget, but, of course, its use is limited to the prop it is designed for.

If you don't have a pitch block and are curious as to what happened when you hit bottom, here's a simple project you can complete in about two hours that will tell you the condition of most any prop. It will tell you which blade is bent in what direction and will even allow you to determine the pitch of any prop that will fit the device. It will give you a written record describing the condition of any section of the blades pinpointing the trouble or it can be kept for future comparisons.

A look at Fig. 1 will give you an idea of how it works. A shaft of straight smooth pipe or thin wall conduit has mounted on it a coffee can drum and the prop to be tested. A pencil snugly held in one of the holes in the right hand upright touches the blade and causes the prop to turn as the shaft is pulled toward this pencil follower. As the whole business moves toward the right and turns, a pencil mounted on a flexible upright traces on the chart taped to the drum or coffee can. After one blade is checked, the rubber band tension on the pencil tracer is released and the assembly is turned to get the next blade in position for checking. When all blades are checked, remove the paper tape for inspection. Comparing the angle

of each trace and noting bumps or hooks in the lines will reveal blade condition. More on this later.

Now to throw this thing together. The basic dimensions can vary somewhat and dimensions not shown can suit the stock you have on hand. The points of most importance are as follows:

1. Shaft: Made of conduit, dowel or tubing and to be smooth and running true at mid-point with less than 1/16" of whip. Its diameter must fit the smallest prop you figure on checking. The fit between prop and shaft is adjusted for bigger bores by wrapping the shaft smoothly with masking tape. Notice that some prop bores have stepped diameters, so wrap to suit.

2. Chart drum: Punch the hole in the ends of the coffee can on center. If it is out much more than 1/32" try another can. Use a punch made from a sharpened short length of the tubing you are using for a shaft. Use punch over the end grain of a block of wood to get a nice clean hole. The locking collars on either side are of wood squares and are bored to slide on the shaft, locked with a wood screw flattened a bit on the point. A couple of rubber bands around the block will provide friction between the blocks and the ends of the can. If you are lucky, the punched holes may fit so tightly locking collars are not required.

3. Flexible mount for tracing pencil: Drill the tight-fitting hole for the tracer pencil so that when the pencil rides the drum it points straight in toward the shaft. The flexible joint is a piece of tin nailed on, not a hinge. A hinge would have a certain amount of looseness in its joint, which would make for inaccurate results.

4. Shaft uprights: The six holes in the right hand upright are drilled on about 3/4" centers so that the pencil used as a follower can be moved to check the blade in two or three places for comparison. More holes can be put in later to suit small props. The location of holes need not be on center. The shaft bearings are made by driving finishing nails alongside the shafts. Allow no side movement here but make sure shaft turns freely with no binding. This works better than Vs notched. In uprights, less friction and shaft can't crawl out of position.

Well, that should be enough dope to get you past the important points.

When you're ready to try your comparator, put your prop on the shaft so that the working surface, hollow side, faces the pencil follower. Tape wrapped on the shaft will allow you to wring on the prop so your prop, shaft

and drum turn as a unit. See that the prop hub face turns fairly true with little wobble.

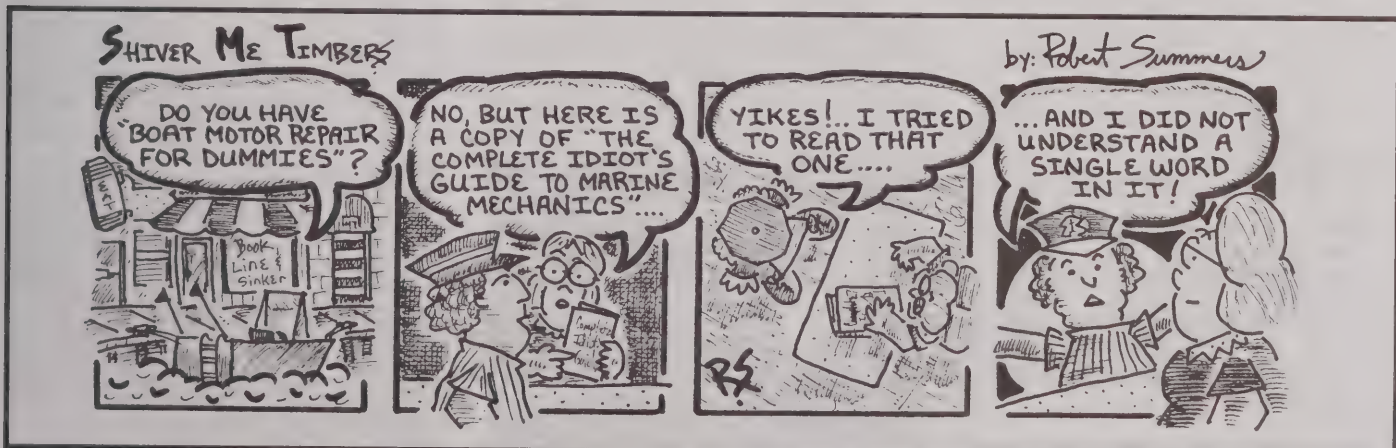
Now cut and tape a length of paper to encircle the drum once. Lock the drum and prop in the proper position and adjust the pencil follower to be touching the area at the trailing edge of the prop. Pull the shaft toward the right while allowing it to turn. As this is done, you'll see that a line is being drawn on the drum which gives the story on that blade. A little practice to get the feel of it and you will soon find that the tracings will repeat themselves, which proves the accuracy of your workmanship. Shifting the follower to another hole will give you another line on the chart so that you can compare different sections of the same blade.

Now to remove the chart from the drum and read out the info on your prop. The trace for each blade should be a fairly straight line, showing the same angle for all sections of the blade. Some props will show a gentle curve but as long as the hollow is on the working side and all blades produce the same kind of line, it is probably O.K. Some manufacturers feel this curve improves efficiency. The thing to look for is that the angle of the traces are to be comparatively the same within a couple of degrees. If one is way off, your prop is not going to work well. Also, if one line has a bump in it, a bent blade is indicated. The tracings should be labelled and numbered so that you can put the chart back on the drum and map out the defective area on the blade for correction. Be sure to number the blades, too.

How much correction should be attempted? This depends on how familiar you are with working metals or how much you are willing to experiment on the remaining blades of broken props to get the feel of it. Quite a bit can be done with patience, some wooden blocks, rawhide hammers and a vise. Some general straightening can be done by holding the tip in a vise and exerting a slow, steady pressure to ease it back and then finishing to final by hammering on wood blocks. Check it out at various stages on your comparator so as not to get too far off. Use the trace line from an undamaged blade for comparison.

For the really bad blade with chunks missing the skills of the prop specialist are required. He is something of an artist. He can feel the metal working and flowing under his fingers and by welding can fashion anew large missing sections of the blade.

Well, although you can now dazzle your friends with your new gadget, we hope you won't be tempted to bash up your prop on the nearest rock just for an excuse to try it out!







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## Bolger on Design



### Tahiti

#### Update on Design # 653 Solo/Two-Some Long-Range Liveaboard Powerboat

(For W.R. O'Banion)

Length Overall 38'6"  
 Length WL 36'4"  
 Beam Overall 9'6"  
 Beam DWL 8'4"  
 Hull-Draft at DWL 1'7"  
 Draft over twin-skegs 1' 10"  
 Displacement at 1'7" hull draft  
 16,500lbs  
 Water Tankage 146gal  
 Holding Tank 112gal  
 Fuel Tankage 780gal diesel  
 Fuel Weight (max.) 5,460lbs  
 Fuel full-to-empty approx 2-1/2" inches  
 deep and light of D.L.W.L., ie. 5" to-  
 tal  
 Deutz F3L1011F air-oil-cooled diesel,  
 42hp @ 3,000rpm  
 Battery Capacity 3,914ah @ 12v  
 Estimated Cruise Speed 6.9 knots @  
 1,800/1,200 rpm (prop)  
 Estimated Fuel Consumption 1.0 gal/  
 hr/6.9 mpg  
 Estimated Nominal Range 5,382nm in  
 35 days  
 Estimated Top Speed at 3,000 rpm 8.0  
 knots  
 Estimated Nominal Range at Top Speed  
 2,800nm

In the Fall of 1999 we spent three issues of *MAIB* (Vol.17 Nos. 12-14, Nov. 1-Dec.1) discussing in great, to some no doubt tedious, detail everything we think folks should know about this very advanced "Personal Passagemaker". The advanced aspect is not reflected in a highly sculpted complex hull-shape with "bulbous bow" extensions forward and a tank-testing budget that would rapidly eat up most, if not all, of a sum equal to her complete materials budget (ply, epoxy, drive-train et al.); a decent model may cost as much as her engine alone.

Nor is she advanced in the number of underwater through-hulls, the particular mix of permanently submerged dissimilar metals toughing it out in some sea-chest, and the bow-thruster tube, or does she impress with the saltwater-dependent machinery and gadgets just waiting to sample clouds of young jelly-fish, tufts of salt-grass, and K-Mart plastic bags.

She also won't convince the composite-bound with any exotic lay-up matrices, this model-year's core-material favorites, or designed-in finite element analysis predicted softening of the laminate after a given number of cycles of flexing (for instance



well-known production sailboat hulls have their structural half-life-meter ticking with every jaunt under canvas or just 'cycling on an exposed mooring).

The systems-happy collector of owners manuals for handy trimming ballast will be left underappreciating of her too simple simplicity, and thus the stark paucity of tech-support numbers on the Central Systems Control Console's Rolodex. She is not particularly swoopy in the current all-slip fast motor-cruiser fashion, nor does she rank high on the salty seaworthiness sales-coefficient ascribed to some sort of traditional stylistic heritage.

Finally, and we can almost take a deep breath here, her construction will not be able to sport 5-axis CNC mold-cutter provenance, nor brag about cleanly bound stacks of material safety-sheets with fine-print longer than your Twinky-bar wrapper, or require really neat clean room conditions for the assembly of a reliable durable structure.

While all cautions and warnings about use and survival of epoxy, and thus that short stack of respective data-sheets, should be highly respected, building a Tahiti, and we think eventually running her, reflects her being advanced by being just plain doable even under more adverse conditions than most would deem desirable. Building your own passagemaker with about double Atlantic range at average speeds higher than most larger sailing cruiser could honestly log? Well, it is being done by an intrepid soul who is rather matter of fact about the proceedings.

Designed for W.R. O'Banion, he is building her in southern Florida, where he has been wrestling with adverse building conditions for the last two+ years. Whether it is global warming or not, having to cool down the body in an airconditioned room after an hour's worth of work in February, winter for snow's sake, is a serious obstacle to daily rapid progress; you better get your act straight within the short manic countdown to epoxy-kick-off.

Nor does it help that seasonal and unseasonable blows will take out a nice building tent/sunshade arrangement the first time you turn your back to pad that Pelican beak. Ants crawling up her emerging structure, cheeks full of whatever, won't be epoxied ply though,





landcrabs underfoot help out by burrowing under the hull-supports, lethal and friendly snakes share the site, with curtailed but undiscouragable lizards hoping to mate on that nice and warm fore-deck laminate, and the cat lounging smack in the middle of that well-trodden path between boat and refrigerator, still chewing on that last tail.

If all this does not wear him down, one could speculate that O'Banion will really be motivated to burn several tanks on long-range running away from it all after she's finally ready to cast off.

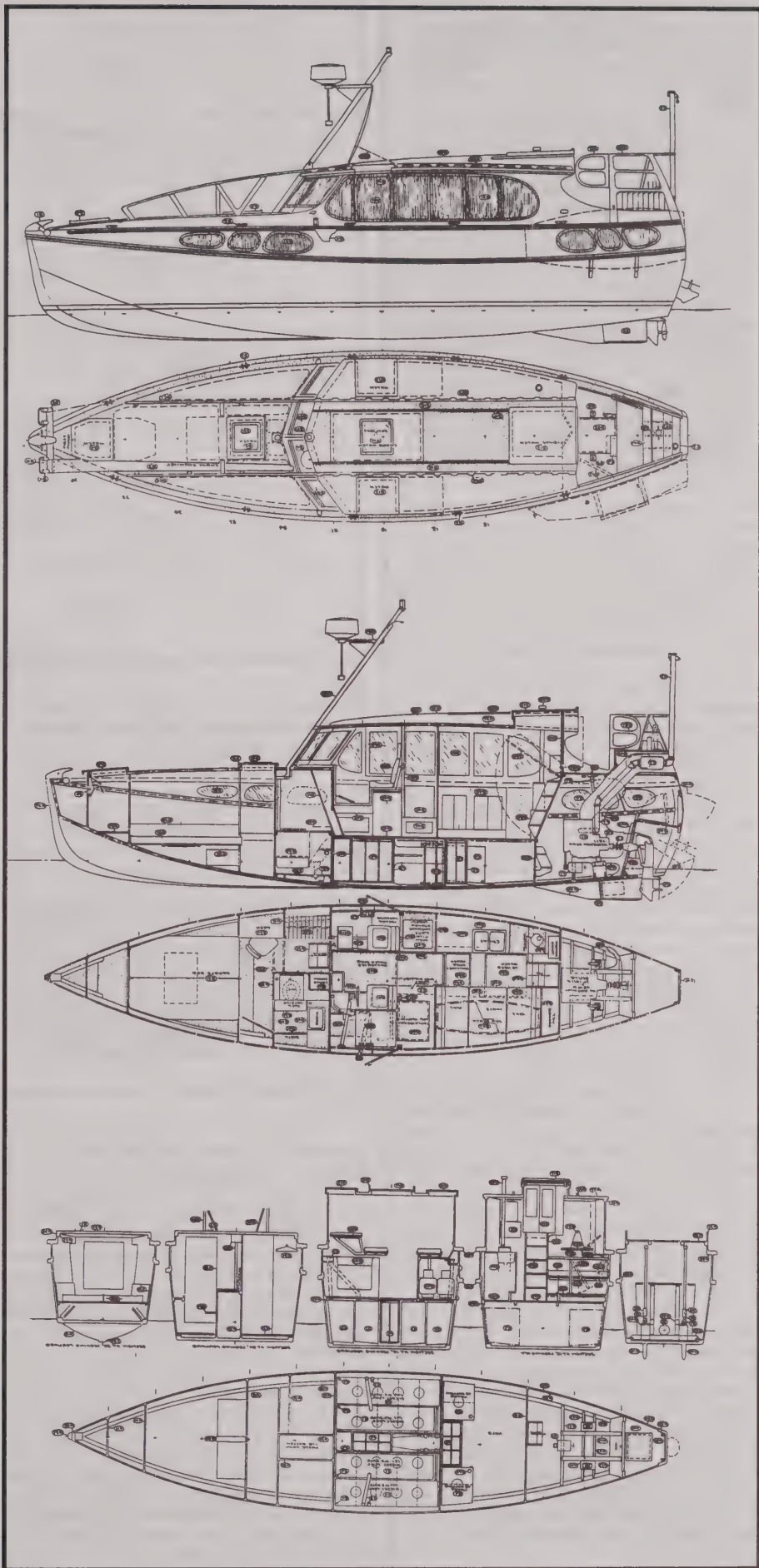
Mind you, she would float now. When needed, ready to help were a cadre of neighbors who do much more than just drop cute remarks about "the ark", particularly when dealing with large panels such as that recalcitrant, unwieldy, glassed and Vee-nosed ice-breaker-bowed, heaviest of them all 2" bottomplate; now there is one to dine out on. Also helping were the two gantries O'Banion assembled to straddle her emerging structure, wheels and all, all as proposed in her building key. These gantries will do all the really really heavy lifting, and preferably only once or twice if building started in the sequence called for by our plans.

Consider that she has no extensive skeleton to hang hull-pieces on to slowly assemble her. Rather you have to build her hull-panels full-size, full-length, full-thickness, and full-weight before anything happens. In fact you build your own 1:1 scale "kit" before you assemble her relatively few but all sizable pieces. But unlike most other plywood construction method proposals you'd be assembling her right-side up!

No need to fret for months in advance, or even cancel the project altogether because you will never get that crane to reach into your odd building spot, on the specter of having to lift and rotate 180 degrees that huge, precious object of so much labor and money, only to hear it groan, crack here and there, decidedly fragile, and at severe risk to itself and surrounding crew should something go wrong, balances shifting, hardware suddenly over-stressing; how many have you done already to have it all under control!

Here only this massive bottom plate has to be turned over, and only once, after having constructed it over a jig you have recycled from having first built the raised-deck sides and then her topsides, counterintuitive but the only sensible construction sequence. Thus the largest piece is built last as it will preclude from then on the vast majority of the minimum necessary construction footprint of the project. If you have acres of real estate to scatter around pieces and are easy and eager to move them around without damaging them and injuring yourself, then getting the sequence right is less important, except that you'd likely add many hours of just moving-time and much money and attention in protecting the finished but as yet separate panels from the weather, and the ants, and lizards, crabs.

Therefore from squarish, smallish collision bulkhead, over odd shaped engine supports, skinny and whippy full-length raised-deck sides, over thick insulated roof and deck laminates, to those topsides spanning a full (so how do we move these?) 40' of ply and glass-laminate, this is both simple and somewhat scary. You should never quite lose your respect for what the lower edge of those





topsides panels will do to your foot if it were at the wrong spot at the wrong time with a rope parting or that old family-heirloom tackle of yours getting away from you; we like \$65 1,500lbs capacity worm-gear winches by Fulton.

On O'Banion's prototype the stout gantries, reliable control of ascent and descent of lifted items, along with a slow and measured approach to handling those panels, attentive to every inch of movement from gravity and wind, all combined with a few extra hands from the neighborhood boat project observation committee, have on this project resulted in this hull structure standing tall and tight.

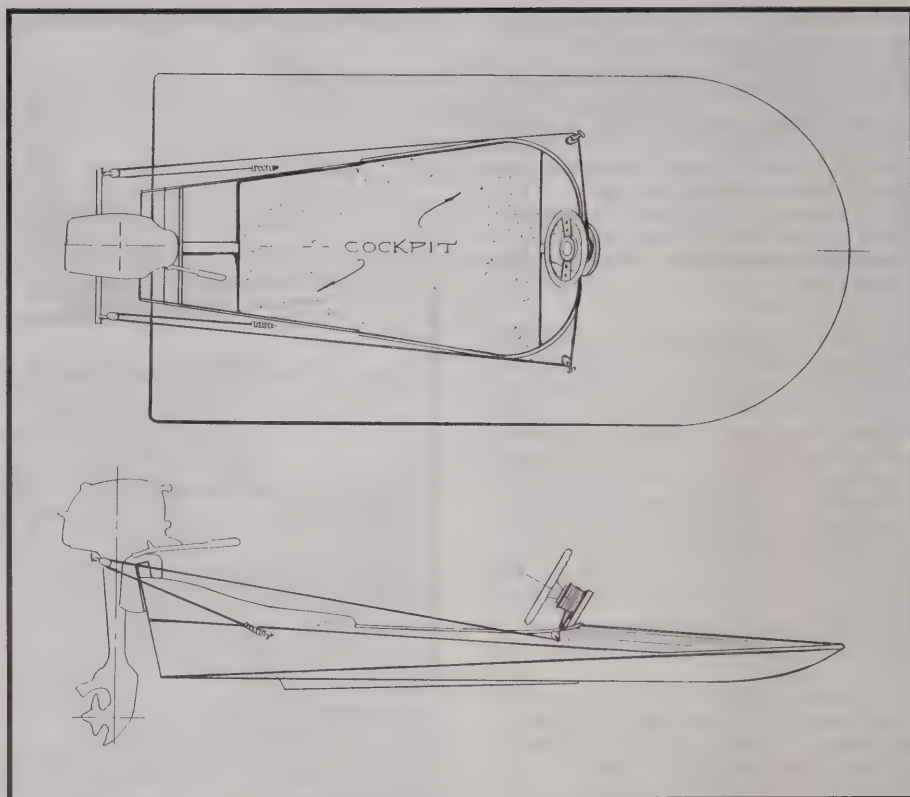
Her engine is sitting on her engine-beds aft, outdrive is about to be hung, the steering gear and rudder materials are on hand, as is a pile of polycarbonate plastic for most of her windows, and the supply-house is just one UPS man away from dropping off another load of epoxy. Her belly is massively glassed with a neat straight line of cloth designating the future boot top, and her bottom has already her first coat of antifouling on since before that plate was turned over. With the rub-rails about finished on her port-side it is almost time to throw some paint on that side as well to protect her epoxy from any more Florida sun.

The next large acquisitions will be fuel tankage to carry in respectively shaped tanks the maximum of 780 gallons, and the massive battery-banks to allow quiet at anchor for, at worst, weekly charging sessions. There is lots left to do, but the big scary stuff is all wrapped up for good. And since she plainly does not have the usual abundance of interior complexities, the actual percentage of relative state of completion is higher than might appear in these photos.

The next mechanically challenging episodes are hanging tanks and assembling that fuel-distribution-panel to plans and running fuel feed and return line. Then on to potting tall battery-cells between the tanks and running both 12vdc and 110vac circuits. All this is less dramatic in her clean unconvoluted structure without the ugly surprises and mystery spaces that just redoing parts of a used boat's comparable systems tends to bog you down with. Next, her fresh and grey/black-water plumbing is kept to a bare minimum of complexity and should constitute fairly predictable and thus limited schedule items.

And while you can work yourself into a lather over color-coordinating her interior, farm out the sewing work canvas or just use regular interior upholstery fabrics over stock foam, etc. materials off the cheap rack, if you can budget it. Rather focus on the detailing of wiring up your nav. and comm. gadgets, or those hypnotic parallelogram windshield wipers etc. i.e. all the tedious stuff only you can and should do so that you will always know your boat's every important detail.

Well done, O'Banion, and we wish you better weather for a while to close her in tight once and for all. And folks, let's not try to track down the building site and harass the man with distractions from the task at hand. He is keeping track of what was right and what was wrong on the plans, and you all will be kept up to date as details of and Grand Schemes for this first Tahiti to float next year. Incidentally from his own footwork in matters of design and performance prediction, he foresees more range than our estimates... Who's next to build one?!



A word about Minimaxed: This fun boat is a take off from an original design circa 1960 by William Jackson called Minimax that was published and re-published in boating handbooks of the period. Probably more of these boats were built than virtually any similar craft and over the years, GLEN-L has received numerous requests for plans for this boat. People who had one when they were young remember the fun they had and now want to build one for their kids or grandkids. The design has been altered to handle current motors and to utilize modern materials, primarily Stitch-N-Glue construction methods. But essentially, it is Minimax revisited.

Minimaxed is a fun boat. It's not intended for rough water and will be wet in a chop, but it's a boat kids love, yes "kids" of all ages enjoy it. This is not our opinion, written to enhance the boat; it's a fact reported by the many builders.

This is a safe boat. There are watertight (foam filled optional) compartments that will support several hundred pounds even with the cockpit full of water. In addition, with a beam half the length, the boat is exceptionally stable.

Simplicity of building and a lot of boat for the buck were undoubtedly major attractions for the original, and this holds true today. We have simplified it even further and utilized modern composites and materials unheard of in the sixties. Full size patterns are furnished for virtually every part in the boat that isn't a straight member; this includes bottom, sides, and deck.

No complicated building form is required. Patterned framing members that are an integral part of the boat form the hull. The construction takes advantage of Stitch-N-Glue construction to eliminate shaping, beveling, and fitting many components. The main part of the building is conventional plywood construction as was the original.

## Glen-L Minimaxed

By Glen L Marine Designs

### Minimaxed Specifications

Length Overall: 8'  
Beam: 4'  
Hull Depth: 7-1/2"  
Hull Weight (approx.): 70 lbs.  
Cockpit Length: 5' 6"  
Cockpit Width (maximum): 32"  
Passengers: 1  
Hull type: Arc bottom, hard chine hull developed for sheet plywood.  
Power: Single short shaft outboard motor to 5hp

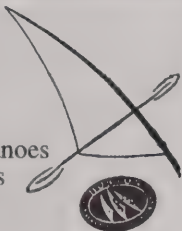
The Minimaxed requires only three sheets of standard 1/4" x 4' x 8' plywood plus a few solid lumber strips. Use the full size patterns, duplicate them to the wood with transfer paper and you're on the way. An ideal father and son or daughter project with the reward of lots of fun when the project is completed.

Plans and Patterns are only \$55 plus there are Stitch-N-Glue kits and a fiberglass covering kit available to aid in the construction process. For more information on the Minimaxed, or the more than 200 other Glen-L designs, call (562) 630-6258, or drop a note to Glen-L Marine Designs, 9152 Rosecrans Ave., XMA, Bellflower, CA 90706. Visit our website, [www.Glen-L.com](http://www.Glen-L.com) to view the entire catalog, view builder photos, see which designs are being built and find a multitude of information on the subject of boat building.



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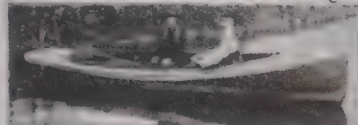
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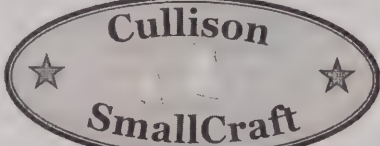


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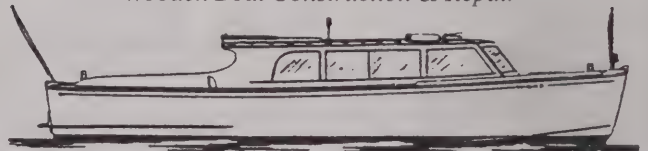
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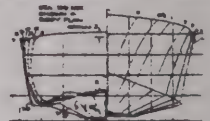
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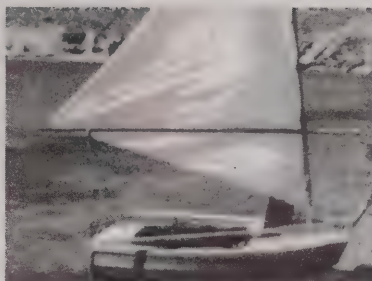
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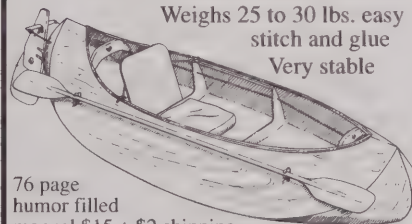
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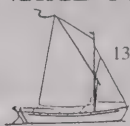
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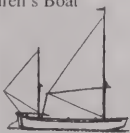


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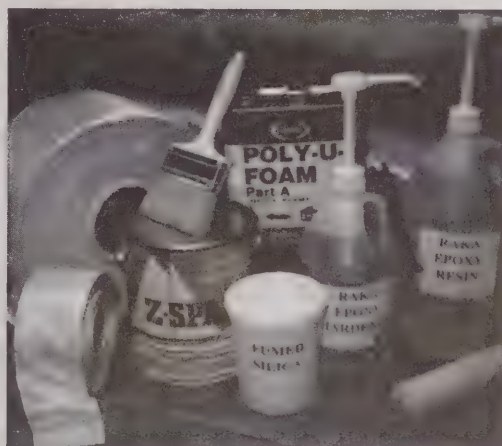
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**16' Perfect Skiff**, Phil Bolger designed sharpie skiff. Taped-seam plywood w/ FG sheathing. 2 yrs old, exc cond. Incl custom yawl rig w/reaching spinnaker, bright-finished decks, carbon-epoxy bottom coating, & Pacific galvanized trlr. \$3,500 OBO. **15' Light Skiff**, Paul Gartside designed rowing boat. Cedar strip construction w/FG sheathing inside & out, weighs approximately 120lbs. 3 rowing stations for 1 or 2 rowers. Carbon-epoxy bottom coating. Incl Calkins galv trlr & 1 set of oars. 2 yrs old, exc cond. \$3,000 OBO.

JOHN TUMA, Fremont, CA, (510) 366-1476. (22)

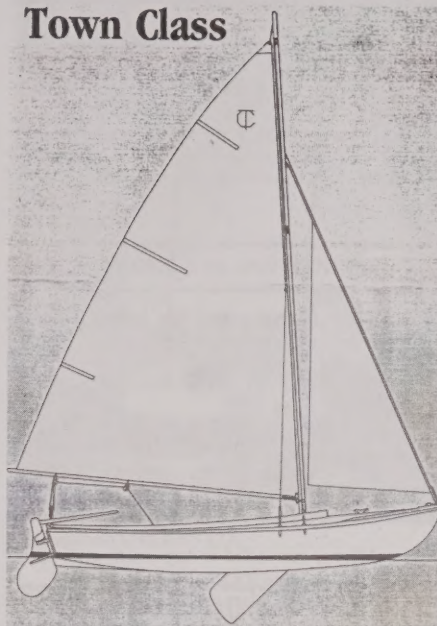
**Hampton One Design**, '57? As seen in WB163. Builder's plate reads Hampton Roads Boat, sail #641. Compl hull/rig/gear, sail as is or restore. Sell or trade for decent ocean kayak, looking for around \$500.

Joshua Mayo, St. Louis, MO, (314) 644-6680. (23)



**'79 US 25 FG Sloop**, totally refurbished. Neat, clean w/2 compl suits sails, 2 mains, 2 Genoa's, 1e set just about brand new. Fixed keel shallow draft, (32"). Compl rewired, has electrical distribution panel w/ master switch. Fwd cabin has a dedicated area for a porta potti, hanging locker, locker for anchor rode, storage under bunks. Main cabin has 2 full sized bunks, built-in drop leaf table, galley counter top w/sink, storage, door to fwd berths & head. Maximum hdrm in main cabin is 5'6". Equipped w/25hp 2-stroke long shaft Yamaha elec start OB on a new swing up mount w/generator, remote controls mntd in cockpit which seats 4 adults. Standing rigging gd, equipped w/lazy jacks, sail covers, sausage bags, life lines, bow sprit & anchor holder, Email photos available. In water ready to sail. Swap for catboat of comparable value, sell her out right as is for \$4,500, or sell her minus the OB for \$3,650. DAVID NAAR, 8045 Stewart's Wharf Rd., Exmore, VA 23350 (23)

## Town Class



**16' Town Class Sloop**, wooden sailboat blt '82 by Pert Lowell Co., Newbury, MA. Oak frames, wood planked deck. Fresh water sailed. 2 sets sails (1 set mint). Trlr. Asking \$2,000.

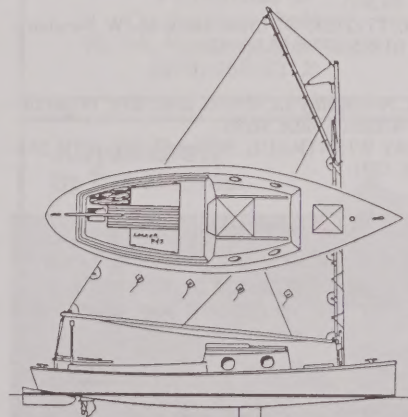
JODY REYNOLDS, Fayetteville, NY, (315) 655-2040, <reycom@dreamscape.com> (23)

**Dyer Dhow**, 12-1/2' sailing dinghy, '76, 3 sails (main, working jib, genoa), rig as either sloop or cat, one pr oars. \$1,950. **19-1/2' Bristol Corinthian**, full keel sloop, Carl Alberg design, LWL 14-1/2', blt by SailstarBoats, 6-1/2' beam, 2'9" draft, 5 sails, boom cover, new cushions, blue hull, exc cond. \$4,100.

ROBERT IZZO, N. Kingstown, RI, (401) 294-3567. (23)

**Rebel Sloop**, '69, 16' FG, trlr, 5hp Evinrude. New running rigging. trlr tires, motor mnt, trlr winch strap. Still in production w/parts available from mfg. \$1,100.

DANIEL E. FARMER, Greenwich, NJ, (856) 455-4903, <danfarmer@erols.com> (23)



**Bay Hen 21**, '92 Florida Bay. Green hull, white topsides, teak trim, tanbark sail, tan bimini, summer cabin, sail cover. Full tan cushions, battery, nav lights, radio, depth sounder, compass, Porta Potty, lines, Danforth, galv Performance trlr w/spare tire. Exc cond, stored indrs. \$9,000.

DICK HARDING, E. Haddam, CT, (860) 434-1004 days, <PILEY@aol.com> (23)



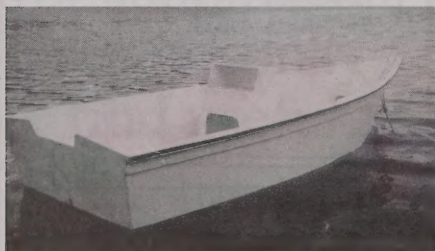


**Bolger Micro**, converted to lug main, goes nice. \$1,500 w/trlr, or poss trades. Video available. NORMAN CASEY, Margate, FL, (954) 970-9984, <lauch@mindspring.com> (23)



**16' Herb Crosby Catboat**, ca '33, cedar on oak, beautifully restored, gaff rigged, almost new Merc 5hp, new trlr, ready to sail. You won't find a nicer one. \$9,800. R. BETTZHER, 81 Crane Neck St., W. Newbury, MA 01985, (978) 363-2753.

**CLC North Bay 18**, w/retractable skeg, bright finish. W/Inuit paddle. \$650. JERRY WEINTRAUB, St. James, NY, (631) 584-7428. (23)



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**16' Custom Cabin launch**, '91. Cedar strip over oak. West(tm) epoxy w/bronze fastenings. Mahogany keel, stem & horn timber. Engine 2002 Yakmar 3cyl diesel. Dual helm hydraulic steering. As new cond. Highest quality throughout. Tlr include. \$44,500. KENT LACEY, Old Lyme, CT, (860) 434-1846, lv message, <LaceyKent@aol.com> (23)



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**Drascombe Driver**, 18' yawl, 7hp IB, tanbark main, roller jib & mizzen, oars, compass, ground tackle, dodger & trlr. Never on mooring. Meticulously cared for during yrs of use. \$4,500 OBO. BROOKS FERGUSON, N. Andover, MA, (978) 682-6851. (23)



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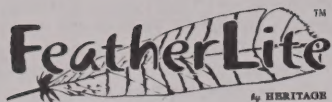
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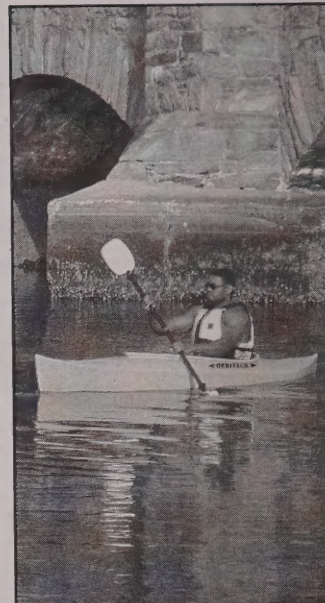
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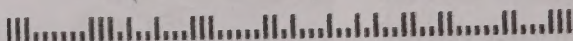
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